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A study of selected group's perceptions of mission and mission effectiveness at a community college

Jarrett, William Harry, Ed.D.

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1989

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A STUDY OF SELECTED GROUP'S PERCEPTIONS
OF MISSION AND MISSION EFFECTIVENESS
AT A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

by

William Harry Jarrett

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the Faculty of the Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
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of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

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APPROVAL PAGE

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The purpose of this study was to determine how the internal group (faculty and administration) and the external group (industry representatives, public school personnel, and county commissioners) compared in their perceptions of Tri-County Community College's current mission, current mission effectiveness, and future mission.

The study was designed to answer three basic questions: 1) did a statistically significant difference exist between the internal group and external group's perception of TCCC's current mission, mission effectiveness, and future mission?; 2) did a statistically significant relationship exist among and between the internal and external sub-groups rank-orderings of current and future mission items?; and 3) did a statistically significant relationship exist between the internal and external group's rank-ordering of current and future mission items?

Chi-square analysis was used to determine statistically significant (.05 level) differences in the ratings of perceived current and future mission, and mission effectiveness by the internal and external groups. Ratings by each sub-group and groups were rank-ordered and Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficients were used to determine consensus

regarding each sub-group and group's ranking of current and future mission items.

Results were significant on eight of thirteen current mission statements, twelve of thirteen mission effectiveness statements, and eight of thirteen future mission statements. A lack of consensus existed among the sub-group's and group's rank-ordering of TCCC current mission. All of the sub-groups and groups were in general agreement in their rank-ordering regarding TCCC's future mission.

Additional data indicated that a majority of respondents felt that a well-defined mission was necessary for effective planning. It was also the consensus of the respondents that geographical location does determine the degree of "ownership" felt toward the college.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
APPROVAL PAGE	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem.....	3
Questions to be Answered	5
Purpose of the Study	6
Significance of the Study.....	7
Design of the Study	8
Definition of Terms.....	9
II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	11
The Community College System in the United States	11
The North Carolina Community College System ..	14
Tri-County Community College	19
Perception	22
Strategic Planning.....	24
Academic Strategic Planning	27
Mission and Strategic Planning	42
Summary.....	60

III. METHODOLOGY	63
Subjects	63
Instrument	65
Procedure and Design	67
Data Analysis	69
IV. RESULTS	71
Introduction.....	71
Response Rate.....	72
Demographic Data.....	73
Research Question's Findings	76
Summary.....	91
Five Follow-up Interviews.....	92
V. DISCUSSION	99
Conclusions and Implications	99
Recommendations	106
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	107
APPENDIX A. QUESTIONNAIRE	114
APPENDIX B. LETTER TO RESPONDENTS	123

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1. Response Rates by Groups	72
Table 2. Years of Service in Position.....	73
Table 3. Age.....	74
Table 4. Sex.....	74
Table 5. Educational Level Obtained	75
Table 6. Understanding of TCCC Mission.....	75
Table 7. Chi-square Values of Perceived Current Mission	77
Table 8. Chi-square Values of Perceived Current Mission Effectiveness	79
Table 9. Chi-square Values of Perceived Future Mission .	80
Table 10. Achieving Educational Excellence.....	81
Table 11. Evaluating Educational Needs	82
Table 12. Providing Informational Services.....	83
Table 13. Spearman rho Correlation Coefficient	85
Table 14. Current Mission Rank-Ordering.....	85
Table 15. Future Mission Rank-Ordering.....	86
Table 16. Current Mission Ranking Between Internal and External Groups.....	86

Table 17. Future Mission Ranking Between Internal and External Groups.....	87
Table 18. Spearman rho Correlation Coefficient Between Groups.....	88
Table 19. Rank Ordering Between Internal and External Groups.....	89
Table 20. Defined Mission	89
Table 21. Funding Process	90
Table 22. Comprehensive Community College.....	90
Table 23. Geographical Location of College.....	91
Table 24. Ownership.....	91

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1. A Strategic Planning Approach to Mission Development.....	45
Figure 2. Major Stages of the Strategic Process Model ...	46
Figure 3. Mission, Role, and Scope	56
Figure 4. A Strategic Planning Framework	59

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Institutions of higher learning are constantly being pressured to question, evaluate, and validate their reason for existence. As part of the regional accreditation and re-accreditation process, they are required to study, update, and re-define their mission/purpose. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS, 1988) declared that institutional effectiveness and institutional integrity are measured not only by the institution's stated purpose but also by its conscientious attempt to fulfill its purpose.

Cross (1985) stated that defining the purpose and mission of community colleges today is not an easy task. In times past, community colleges were in agreement that the common purpose and mission was to provide educational opportunities to previously unserved segments of society. Currently, the major concern is once the doors are opened, what are the appropriate goals for community colleges? (Cross, 1985)

In a study by Duea (1981), college presidents were asked to identify the most critical issues currently facing colleges as well as over the next decade. Changing mission and purpose ranked fifth out of twenty critical issues the

institutions currently faced but ranked second behind financial concerns as the most critical problems colleges would face during the next ten years.

The attempt by an institution to gain a clearer sense of its educational purpose is part of an academic strategy (Keller, 1983). Effective planning and management are necessary for dealing with the problem of defining and determining the institution's present and future direction.

Kotler and Murphy (1981) argue that if higher education systems are to survive in the years ahead, strong emphasis on planning is essential, and the type of planning that appears most appropriate for the future is strategic planning. Strategic planning has been defined as "the process of developing and maintaining a strategic fit between the organization and its changing marketing opportunities" (Kotler and Murphy, 1981, p. 471). Groff and Cope (1985) described strategic planning as being neither new nor original but as opportunity analysis. Strategic planning was viewed as an opportunity to examine institutional techniques for problem-solving, and as step-by-step directions for persons assigned to the task of leading a planning team.

The investigation of institutional mission and the establishment of a strategic planning process are interrelated. Kotler and Murphy (1981) wrote that an institution cannot effectively define its direction until it

examines its mission by answering the following questions: What is our business? Who is the customer? What is our value to the customer? What will and should our business be? Answering these questions is one of the most difficult tasks a college or university will have to undertake. Successful organizations continuously raise and answer these questions in a thoughtful and thorough manner (Kotler and Murphy, 1981).

Statement of the Problem

Within a community college, members of the organization possess perceptions of the college's mission and the degree to which this mission is effectively being carried out. Those outside the college also hold perceptions of its mission and effectiveness.

Perception can be described as a fundamental part of reality; therefore, those perceptions held by members of both internal and external groups within an educational community are genuine. It is important that both internal and external groups share common perceptions of a college's mission, goals, and its effectiveness. Harrison (1985) argued that the more groups agree in the assessment of community college goals, the fewer differences that will occur. A divergence of goals can create both internal and external conflict. On the other hand, convergence of

opinions through goals consensus can move the college in an agreed upon direction and may result in more internal and external cooperation (Harrison, 1985).

McClenney (1979) stated that internal and external assessment must be ongoing and that a clear definition of mission is a prerequisite to planning. Not only must the mission be accepted by the internal group but it also must be created and reviewed by them.

According to Keller, "evidence mounts that organizations are shaped by outside forces and by their markets at least as much as internal determinations" (Keller, 1983, p. 109). These internal and external forces are identified as groups that have a definite and significant impact on the direction and future of the institution.

Internally, faculty and administrators share the responsibility of defining and formulating the community college's mission (SACS, 1988). Externally, groups exist that influence the college's direction. Business and industry influence the mission because of their need for trained employees and for partnerships with the schools. County commissioners have a significant impact upon the college because they provide funds and, in some instances, because they possess the power to appoint members to the school's local governing board of trustees. Public schools are an important external group because of their being a significant

source of students for community colleges. Public school leaders possess considerable influence upon students and their parents and can play a significant part in the formulation of the college's mission through participation in cooperative programs.

The problem was to determine if significant differences existed among perceptions of external groups (business/industry representatives, public school personnel, and county commissioners) and those internal groups (staff) regarding the college's mission and mission effectiveness. Specifically, data used to examine this problem was gathered from research involving a member of the North Carolina Community College System, Tri-County Community College.

Questions to be Answered

The study was designed to examine the following questions:

- 1) did a statistically significant difference exist between the internal group and external group's perception of TCCC's current mission?;
- 2) did a statistically significant difference exist between the internal group and the external group's perception of TCCC's current mission effectiveness?;

- 3) did a statistically significant difference exist between the internal group and the external group's perception of TCCC's future mission?;
- 4) did a statistically significant relationship exist among and between the internal and external group's sub-groups priority rankings of current and future mission items?; and
- 5) did a statistically significant relationship exist between the internal and external group's priority rankings of current and future mission items?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine how faculty and administrators, business/industry representatives, public school personnel, and county commissioners compared in their perceptions of Tri-County Community College's mission and mission effectiveness.

It is important to know how various groups perceive an institution's mission and its effectiveness in meeting that mission in order to help the institution know itself for the first time. Keller (1983) wrote that the beginning point is to develop a self-consciousness for the organization. This self-consciousness is knowing and understanding for the first time what business an institution is in, wants to be in, and

what is central to the health, growth, and quality of the organization (Keller, 1983).

Significance of the Study

The results of this study will be of importance to Tri-County Community College, its employees, its constituents, and the community it serves. This study provides an in-depth look at the college's reason for existence and uses input from various groups that are instrumental in shaping the college's future direction. In addition, it adds to the general knowledge base regarding the college's proper mission in the community.

This study comes at a time when the North Carolina Community College System is studying its future direction. In a report issued by the Commission on the Future of the North Carolina Community College System (1989), the Commission reported that an extensive investigation of the mission, effectiveness, and potential of the state's community colleges had been conducted. A number of fundamental changes were recommended by this Commission. One recommendation focused on each college's instituting an effective planning process directed toward strategic goal setting and assessment of performance data.

The News and Observer (Raleigh, N. C., 1988) expressed the opinion that North Carolina's community

colleges find themselves in a dilemma: What direction should the system take? This editorial indicated that the original mission must change primarily because the state's economy is changing. It is implied that the community college system has too broad a focus. Attempting to answer the needs and wants of a particular community has been one mission of the colleges, but this mission needs to be balanced (News and Observer, 1988).

Although the results of this study cannot be generalized to other community colleges it acutely demonstrates the need for an organization to explore and examine its intended purpose. The study further emphasizes the need for an awareness of the held perceptions of consequential internal and external groups. The relationship of the study to the recommended future direction of the state's community college system is of primary significance.

Design of the Study

The remainder of the study is divided into four chapters. The second chapter reviews the literature related to the development of the community college system both nationally and in North Carolina. Also provided is a history of Tri-County Community College, which is the focal point of this study. A search of related literature offers information on perception, mission exploration, and academic strategic

planning. The methodology used in the collection of data is described in the third chapter. The fourth chapter discusses the results of the research; and chapter five provides the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions apply:

External groups – Those selected groups outside the college that have a direct and important impact upon the college. These groups include:

1) business/industry representatives (plant managers and industrial relations managers) – This group is important to the college because it represents a potential job market for the school's graduates as well as a potential source of financial support and partnerships.

2) county commissioners – This external group has significant impact upon the college as a source of funding as well as through the appointing of members to the local governing boards of trustees.

3) public school superintendents and high school principals – School personnel are of significant importance to the college because their influence is needed in recruiting high school students and in the developing of cooperative programs with the college.

Internal groups – The full-time faculty and senior administrators of Tri-County Community College. By virtue of their positions, the members of this group share a major part of the responsibility in directing the college towards its mission, mission effectiveness and subsequent planning.

Mission – The function of the college as defined by the purpose or mission statement found within the school catalogue.

Mission Effectiveness – A perceptual evaluation of how successful the college is in meeting the objectives of the mission statement.

Perception – A discriminate judgment requested from respondents in the study based on their interpretations, observations, and relationships with TCCC.

North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) – The comprehensive community college system in North Carolina of which Tri-County Community College is a member.

Tri-County Community College (TCCC) – The community college specifically used in this study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW of RELATED LITERATURE

The review of literature provides an indepth look at all related areas involved in the study. Included are historical discussions of the beginning and growth of the community college movement in the United States, the North Carolina Community College System, and one of its member institutions, Tri-County Community College. A discussion of perception, strategic planning and academic strategic planning is included. Throughout the review of literature, mission definition, development and review are revealed as important function of strategic planning.

The Community College System in the United States

For many years, educational preparation in the United States was concerned primarily with elementary, secondary, and college or university levels. Little educational opportunity was provided for those students wanting to learn a particular skill or trade in a shorter period of time. Because of this earlier void, vocational and technical training became an extremely important part of the higher education system.

An examination of the history of higher education in the United States reveals some fundamental changes in structure and mission. Early American colleges were designed primarily on the basis of their English and European predecessors. The curriculum was an established and classical one and was generally four years in length. Most of the students were young men from elite and affluent families. The primary purpose of these colleges was to transmit knowledge and values considered most important to serve the potential leaders of the country (Diener, 1986).

The Merrill Act in 1862 helped disassemble the classical curriculum that was primarily practiced in American higher education. This legislative act called for the establishment in each state institutions of higher education that were designed to offer programs in mechanic arts and agriculture (Diener). This action caused a new kind of faculty to emerge—one with vocational and research interests. Other new courses in social sciences, natural sciences, engineering, and business were developed. The content of these courses were designed to deal with the immediate practical needs of society (Diener).

Diener regarded the junior college as an American invention and William Rainey Harper as the father of this movement. Harper, who was president of Chicago University, divided the baccalaureate programs in half,

calling the lower division the junior college and the upper division the upper half. Other junior colleges were developed in the Midwest whose goals were accessibility, providing learning opportunities for students not suited for the university and as feeder schools for the university (Diener).

It was reported by Diener that as junior colleges grew in America, another basic function emerged relating to the employment needs of the nation. Vocational and job training became an important mission of many junior colleges by the 1930s. Following World War II, the junior college system expanded its mission even further. It began to provide opportunities for job skill training and expanded services to all adults, not just youth. Many junior colleges became the focal point of the community and emerged into what is now known as community colleges (Diener).

Tillery and Deegan (1985) identified four developmental periods, or generations that were a part of the evolution of two-year colleges. The designations were

- Generation 1: Extension of High School (1900–1930)
- Generation 2: Junior College (1930–1950)
- Generation 3: Community College (1950–1970)
- Generation 4: Comprehensive Community College
(1970–mid 1980's)

It is Tillery and Deegan's contention that the community colleges are now in the fifth generation. There now exists nearly 1,000 public community colleges serving the world's widest diversity of students who account for over one-third of the enrollments in contemporary American higher education (Tillery and Deegan). In looking toward the future, Tillery and Deegan contend that the mission of the community college is dependent upon the character of changes that are occurring within society.

Cohen and Brawer (1982) characterized the community colleges as untraditional, not following the tradition of higher education as developed from the colonial colleges through the universities. The authors view community colleges as changing frequently, never resting on what has been done before, and trying new approaches to old problems.

The North Carolina Community College System

Community colleges have become a very important part of higher education in the United States. One of the largest systems today is the North Carolina Community College System, which was established in 1963 and celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in May, 1988 (NCCCS Report, 1988).

Segner (1974) provided a historical account of the North Carolina Community College System. In December,

1946, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Clyde Erwin, asked the State Board of Education to consider the establishment of community junior colleges. The State Education Commission, in 1948, echoed Erwin's proposal for public community colleges in North Carolina. Two bills relating to the allocation of funds for the study of establishing a community college system were introduced in the 1949 General Assembly but died in committee. However, authorization was given to appoint a community college study committee and Erwin appointed this commission in 1950 and gave it the responsibility to survey the need for a system of state-supported community colleges and to project a plan for their development (Segner).

Based upon the results of the Community College Study, Representative Roy A. Taylor of Buncombe County introduced a bill in 1953, authorizing the creation, establishment, and operation of community colleges under the supervision of the State Board of Education. Because of considerable opposition to the bill, the 1953 General Assembly failed to pass it. Various suggested reasons for its defeat include the untimely death of Erwin in 1952, little enthusiasm for a community college system from Governor Umstead, and opposition from the state's private colleges (Segner).

According to Segner, the 1957 General Assembly allocated funds to the State Board of Education to establish a statewide system of industrial education centers. These centers were to train adults and selected high school students in order to provide a better trained labor force for the state. The General Assembly, in 1959, officially authorized industrial education centers as a type of vocational school and by 1961 there were 18 centers in partial or full operation. These centers were under the operation of the State Board of Education and local public school boards of education. The mission of these industrial education centers was to provide vocational and technical training and offered six major programs in machine operators, craftsmen, technicians, supervisory training, upgrading classes for employed adults, and trade preparatory courses (Segner).

Segner reported that between 1957 and 1963, two parallel post-high school systems of less than four years existed in North Carolina. These were public junior colleges and industrial education centers but neither involved comprehensive educational programs. In 1961, Governor Terry Sanford appointed the Governor's Commission on Education Beyond the High School (The Carlyle Commission). This commission was appointed because of a concern for program duplication and a need for better planning. It

studied the methods for expanding educational offerings at the post-high school level and recommended that the public junior colleges and industrial education centers be brought into one administrative organization operating under the State Board of Education and local boards of trustees. In 1963, the General Assembly passed the Omnibus Higher Education Act which included the recommendation of the Carlyle Commission, and the community college system was established (Segner).

The North Carolina Community College System has grown from these beginnings in 1963 to include a total of 58 technical and community colleges located across the state. Over 600,000 students were enrolled in both credit and non-credit programs during the 1987-88 school year (N.C.C.C.S. Annual Report, 1987-88). In 1980, the system was placed under its own state governing board and in 1987, the State Board of Community Colleges adopted the following revised mission statement:

The North Carolina Community College System is a statewide organization of public two-year postsecondary educational institutions with an open-door admissions policy. Its mission is to provide adults in North Carolina with quality and convenient learning opportunities consistent with

identified student and community needs. These opportunities are accessible to all adults regardless of age, sex, socio-economic status, ethnic origin, race, religion, or handicap. Educational and training programs are designed to enhance the personal, social, and economic potential of the individual and to produce measurable benefits to the state. The system fulfills this mission by providing:

- vocational programs and courses for students desiring to prepare for skilled trades or to upgrade their job skills;
- technical programs and courses that meet the career needs of individuals;
- transferable programs and courses for students desiring to attend a senior college or university;
- special occupational training and upgrading programs and services for businesses, industries, and agencies;
- programs and courses in adult basic education, high school completion, and continuing education;
- counseling, career guidance, job placement services, and other programs essential to

- developing the potential of individual students;
- programs and services to enrich the quality of community life;
- effective and cooperative relationships with the schools, colleges, universities, government agencies, and employers across the state, and
- sound management practices and systematic planning to allocate the resources required to achieve the stated objectives of the North Carolina Community College System (North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges publication, 1988).

The report further expresses the intention of the North Carolina Community College System to adopt strategies for implementation of objectives and goals that will ensure the fulfilling of their mission (N.C. State Board of Community Colleges, 1988).

Tri-County Community College

In November 1964, the North Carolina State Board of Education established an extension unit of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute to serve Clay, Cherokee, and Graham counties. The unit was located in Cherokee County and officially named Tri-County Industrial Education Center,

operating under the authority of the State Department of Community Colleges. In 1967, the school became Tri-County Technical Institute and on July 1, 1978, with the addition of a college transfer program, the school officially was named Tri-County Community College. (Tri-County Community College Catalogue, 1989-90)

Within the catalogue is the college's following purpose/mission statement:

The purpose of Tri-County Community College is to provide educational opportunities on a post-secondary level in the broad areas of vocational, technical, and college transfer preparation. The college is committed to the growth and improvement of its academic programs, and of its service to the community in a manner which is appropriate to the needs of our service area and within our resources. In addition, the college strives to provide continuing education and other community oriented activities.

Tri-County Community College operates under an "open door" admission policy. Each student is accepted as a worthy individual with unique abilities and capabilities; consequently, the college will provide appropriate educational experiences based on sound guidance and educational

philosophy. The college endeavors to develop in each individual a mature and positive realization of his or her potential.

The college pledges to fulfill its purpose/mission through the following objectives:

- To provide vocational, technical, college transfer, and preparatory educational services.
- To achieve educational excellence by expanding and improving our academic programs.
- To maintain a strong Continuing Education program based on community needs and interest with emphasis on:
 - * Adult Basic Education
 - * High School Equivalency diploma
 - * Personal growth and life enrichment
 - * Cultural and community services
 - * Training for individuals with special needs
- To continue to evaluate the educational needs of the community.
- To provide retraining programs for new and expanding industries and to provide other support services to business and industry.
- To provide counseling, guidance, and testing services to students and members of the community.

- To maintain cooperative agreements with the public schools and articulation between Tri-County Community College and other institutions of higher learning.
- To expand and fully utilize the institutions resources in response to the needs of the immediate service area.
- To provide informational services to the community which stimulates understanding of the purpose, goals, accomplishments, and needs of Tri-County Community College.
- To review the institution's purpose and objectives on an on-going basis. (TCCC Catalogue, 1989-90, p. 12)

Perception

Because perception is a concept to be measured in this study, establishing a definition or the context in which it will be used was necessary.

Perception is a word used frequently in psychology but is also a term with several meanings in common speech. Dictionary definitions include perception as : 1. a) "the act of perceiving or the ability to perceive; mental grasp of objects, qualities, etc. by means of the senses; awareness; comprehension" b) "insight or intuition, or the faculty for

these" 2. "the understanding, knowledge, etc, gotten by perceiving, or a specific idea, concept, impression, etc. so formed" (Webster's New World Dictionary, 1978, p. 1054).

Allport (1955) stated that perception is an awareness of the conditions around us. It is dependent to the degree which the impressions of these conditions make upon us. Perception is the way things look to us but it also involves an understanding, awareness, a "meaning" or "recognition" (Allport). Shedding scientific definitions and applications reveals perception as a manner in which knowledge of the world is gained. Within the frame of reference of this definition, perception is concerned with the manner in which an individual comes to know the world (Blake and Ramsey, 1951).

In the context of this study, perception was restricted to the quality, relations, observation, and judgments made by an individual concerning those things around him. Bartley (1958) stated that in perceiving, the individual interprets, discriminates, and identifies conditions experienced to be existing in the environment.

Perception has been utilized in a number of studies conducted in community colleges. Pilcher (1976) conducted a study to identify and compare the importance of present and preferred institutional goals as perceived by selected members of Waubonsee Community College staff, student

body, trustees, and community. Averette (1980) measured the perceptions of the image of Cape Fear Technical Institute as held by selected formal leaders and clientele.

Representative groups from the Isothermal Community College service area were surveyed to determine their perceptions of the community college goals (Morrow, 1976).

Strategic Planning

Planning is not a new concept. The Greeks, Romans, and Chinese planned. Alexander Hamilton's 1791 "Report on the Subject of Manufacturers" made to the United States Congress was a strategic plan designed to make the country less dependent on foreign countries for manufactured goods. Strategic planning was conducted by Thomas Jefferson when he negotiated the Louisiana Purchase, (Keller, 1983).

Keller reported that national economic planning was formulated in the early 1920s and became popular after World War 11. Between 1950 and 1970, most graduates of American university planning programs went into three areas of planning: city planning, transportation planning, and planning for state and federal agencies. The planning, programming, and budgeting (PPB) system, created by Charles Hitch, was not only a strategic defense study, but was declared by President Johnson, to be used in all federal agencies as well (Keller, 1983). PPB changed the course of

American planning because it began to replace two other forms of planning that had become popular in the postwar decade: management science and incrementalism.

Management science became a big business for American business organizations but did not take hold on many campuses. Keller attributed this failure to the adherence of campus administrators to incrementalism.

Incrementalism is partisan— political and holds that the world is not rational and neither are the people at times. According to incrementalists, change comes about not through systematic planning but a combination of tiny little steps (Keller).

Lindblom (1959) argued that the partisan— political approach was rational. Establishing strategic goals in an organization should not be part of a precise, measurable package but accomplished through using purposeful, politically astute, and management practices that are part of the incremental process. Quinn (1977) stated that top management executives develop goals through a very complicated, political, consensus building process that is outside the structure of most management systems and frequently has no precise beginnings or ends.

Keller (1983) proposed that the search for a third way of planning has emerged in recent years, one that eschews the management science approach as well as

incrementalism. This search has led to the creation of strategic planning which attempts to encompass both the rational-economic and the partisan-political approaches.

The concept of strategic planning has a broad definition. In a business environment, strategic management issues are usually defined as those affecting the relationship of an organization to its environment. The strategy is a result of environmental, organizational capabilities, and current competitive position (Biggadibe, 1981).

According to Abell (1980), one point of view suggests that the growth of strategic planning has not yet resulted in a consensus of what it entails and another suggests that a planned starting point for a business is the decision to hold, harvest or build the market share. Once this decision about the objectives of a business has been made, then the marketing, manufacturing, research and development, and other functional plans follow. The contrasting view is that strategic formulation is much more creative. Business strategy pivots on defining the business in a way that leads to competitive superiority. Defining a business is the starting point of strategic planning (Abell).

Considerable progress has been made in the development and use of strategic planning as a management tool. This development is indicated by

management's heavy emphasis on planning as a part of managing and searching for improved ways to do a job. Other indications include the increase in consulting services, research efforts within the academic community, and the attention given to planning through the emergence of courses and seminars. Lorange (1982) argued that despite our understanding of strategic planning, implementation issues are critical. There are a number of implementation requirements for effective strategic corporate planning ranging from knowing its benefits, commitment by the user, to a realistic assessment of resource needs. Establishing these requirements helps ensure successful implementation of the strategic planning process.

Academic Strategic Planning

Similar to the corporate world of business, strategic planning has become very important in higher education. Declining enrollments are a problem for some colleges and universities while most all are having to deal with financial problems and competition for students. For those hoping to survive and become stronger, strengthening their management and shaping academic strategies are necessary. Keller (1983) listed six distinguishing features that separate strategic planning from its predecessors of systems analysis, incrementalism, management science, long-range planning,

and doing what always has been done. Academic strategic decision making means that a college: 1) is active, not passive, 2) keeps the institution in step with the changing environment, 3) is aware that higher education is competitive, 4) concentrates on decisions, not forecasts and analysis, 5) is tolerant of controversy, and 6) concentrates on the fate of the institution above everything else.

Kotler and Murphy (1981) proposed that most colleges and universities are not set up with a strategic planning capacity. They are good at day-to-day operations and their planning usually occurs at three levels. The first level is budgeting and scheduling (all institutions are forced to conduct this type of planning). The second level involves short-range planning that includes recruitment of students, physical plant decisions, development efforts, and program modification. Long range planning comprises the third level. This level of planning uses both quantitative and qualitative assessments of the external environment to identify priorities and strategies. Identifying the school's mission is usually a part of this process. Kotler and Murphy assert that strategic planning should not be confused with any of the three levels of planning mentioned. It is a more long-run, comprehensive, strategic approach.

Kotler and Murphy stated that the steps in strategic planning are to analyze the internal and external environments, conduct a resources analysis which consists of identifying its strengths and weaknesses, and make goal formulation. This procedure involves establishing 1) the mission, 2) the long and short-run objectives, and 3) specific current goals. Mission is defined as the basic purpose of the organization; objectives as a major variable that the institution will emphasize; and goals as an organizational objective that becomes specific with respect to magnitude, time, and responsibility.

Kotler and Murphy contend that the most important benefit of strategic planning is that it requires higher education to undertake a more market-oriented and systematic approach to long-range planning. It is their opinion that strategic planning removes many threats that the future holds for colleges and universities.

Eadie (1987) stated that in order for community and technical colleges to meet the challenges ahead, institutions should formulate developmental strategies. Eadie discussed the way institutions can formulate institutional developmental strategies and build strong executive teams at the same time by a process called "Team Issue Management." Included within this development is basic planning, management, and administrative systems that

include strategic planning. Effective team building was identified by Eadie as a recent management technique used to teach management to work together. Eadie argued that this process had little enduring positive effect because executives always find themselves back in organizations that have not changed.

Eadie's Team Issue Management applies to two major phases: 1) the selection of the institutional issue to be addressed, and 2) the formulation of specific institutional developmental strategies to address the issues. The executive team works together to identify and select issues, and to formulate and manage the implementation of strategies. Eadie argued that for his process to be successful, it requires presidential leadership; a committed executive team; an outside facilitator; and a distinct institutional agenda.

Toll (1982) contended that strategic planning was an increasing priority for colleges and universities. He argued that planning can be the most important activity in higher education for the 1980s. According to Toll, planning needs a long view which is comprehensive and strategic. He asserted that strategic planning is different from previous planning in that it stays in touch with the external environment in addition to internal needs. Toll stated that strategic planning will not be accepted by all because

"strategy" has military overtones and planning is viewed by others as a process whereby administrators gain extended control over faculty initiative.

Masoner and Essex (1987) argued that a great deal has been written regarding strategic planning in four -year colleges, but that little has been directed toward junior/community colleges. They summarized the following characteristics of Keller's academic strategy:

- An active stance regarding the institution's position in history;
- An outward look focusing the institution toward the changing environment;
- A competitive spirit, recognizing that higher education is subject to economic market condition's and to competitions;
- A planning process that concentrates on decisions, not documented plans, analysis, forecasts, and goals;
- A strategy that blends rational and economic analysis, political maneuvering and psychological interplay, and one that is participatory and highly tolerant of controversy;
- A strategic plan that concentrates on the fate of the institution above everything else (Masoner and Essex, 1987, p. 32).

It was suggested by Masoner and Essex that two-year colleges should take some very definite steps for the late

1980s if they are to adopt a strategic planning process. These include 1) self-identification – deciding upon its reason for existence, 2) self-analysis – analyzing curriculum, and identifying strengths and weaknesses, 3) analysis of the service area – ascertaining a clean picture of the institutions potential and actual clientele, and 4) decision-making – after completing the analysis, decisions must be made regarding institutional emphasis and its ability to offer strong programs. Total institutional involvement of personnel is necessary in the development of institutional direction (Masoner and Essex).

Knoell (1980) indicated that there are at least four stages of planning through which most community colleges go. The initial stage of planning is the master planning stage which normally begins when a new college or district is established. These plans are usually for a period of from ten to twenty years and are updated periodically to reflect changes in the economy, population to be served, society at large, and laws and regulations affecting community colleges. This updating comprises the second stage. The third stage of planning at community colleges involves planning beyond the master plan. The fourth stage is derived from a need to plan for redirection, retrenchment, or both. Knoell argued that the problem of declining enrollments and reduced funding will probably force most

community colleges into planning for retrenchment or redirection rather than expansion in the 1980's. Knoell defined retrenchment as redirecting course offerings, programs, and services in response to declining enrollment and resources. Redirection alludes to the determination of priorities among student constituencies, functions and programs, community and student services, and athletic programs.

Groff (1983) discussed strategic planning as a process of sequential steps that initiate with the statement of the college mission, assessing the external environment, and the internal environment. Information gathered as a result of these credits result in the matching of opportunities in the environment with identified internal strengths. Development of specific strategic plans are formed and are followed through the sequential implementation and evaluation process. In the community college, Groff concluded that strategic planning was an objective methodology based on external assessment and internal audit.

Richardson and Rhodes (1981) argued that community colleges have entered a fifth generation under two conflicting conditions--fiscal restraint and a demand for quality. They predict that these conditions will probably remain for the remainder of the century. In response to these conditions

three issues will be addressed: 1) Who should be served? 2) What services can be offered? 3) Who will pay for these services?

According to Richardson and Rhodes, the most promising condition for institutional strategy needed to achieve necessary change is planning. It is their contention that a strategic planning process should be responsive to pressures from the community and from government agencies as well as sensitive to the needs, skills, and values of faculty and students. There is no single design for a planning process and each institution will be required to develop its own process designed to meet local needs and capabilities. Richardson and Rhodes argued that even though much has been written about strategic planning, more is known about what it is not rather than about what it is.

In describing Cuyahoga Community College's planning process, Ellison (1977) referred to Uytterhoeven, Ackerman, and Rosenblum's casebook Strategy and Organization which proposes a six-phase strategic planning process: 1) the community college's "strategic profile" that includes the college's defined purpose and its posture relative to its service area, 2) a "strategic forecast," based on an understanding of the external environment, 3) a "resource audit" that identifies strengths and weakness, 4) "strategic

alternatives" based on an internal and external framework, 5) a "test of consistency" which is used to relate college resources to constraints imposed by the external environment, and 6) the strategic choice that is made either reaffirming the present strategy or developing a new one. Ellison argued that developing a strategic plan is difficult because it deals with a future which is hard to predict.

Groff and Cope (1985) reported that in basic and advanced workshops on strategic planning conducted for college personnel, four areas were addressed: 1) assessing an institution's external environment; 2) auditing an institution internal environment to determine strengths/weakness; 3) using both sets of information to develop visions and alternative scenarios; and 4) making choices about strategic options and alternatives as a prelude to managing the plan. Part of the internal audit includes a review of the mission statement, goals, and objectives.

Stone (1987) argued that strategic planning is not a panacea. The process has limitations, including the way it is applied and the results that are obtained. Stone identified a number of pitfalls to be observed in the planning process: disillusionment caused by failed expectations, long-range planning substituted for crisis management, planning

used to carry out a hidden agenda, and the relationships that develop among members of the planning team.

Stone stated that the term "strategic planning" has replaced "long-range planning." Many professional planners, according to Stone, contend that strategy deals with change, whereas planning is operational.

Strategic planning does not forecast the future but raises questions that can be fitted into a framework from which logical action congruent with the school's mission can take place. It is possible a change in the mission itself is a needed conclusion (Stone).

Fuller (1976) argued that five specific characteristics should be present in the academic planning process: assessment of values, data collection and analysis, priority determination and implementation strategies, operational objectives, and a continuous process. Academic planning may result in more clearly defined missions and at the same time the creation of greater vitality within academe is crucial.

Hesburgh (1983) discussed the Carnegie Council policy studies on higher education's final report called 3000 Futures. Hesburgh reported that what is most certain for the next 17 years is uncertainty. The most difficult task of higher education is that of retrenchment. According to Hesburgh, what is needed across higher education is a

tighter ship that only the faculty can rig. This will require vision and perceptiveness, strength in decision that has not always been present in a more affluent day. Hesburgh reports that according to the Carnegie Report a number of institutions that now exist will no longer be around after the year 2000. Their fate will be due primarily to reacting in a short-term manner to long-term problems; a failure to analyze their particular situation and take corrective actions; and their attraction of fewer students and those already educationally marginal and behind the time. According to Hesburgh, in the future each institution must find its own uniqueness. Strengths to build on must be identified and weaknesses eliminated. Institutions must work to realize their creative possibilities and financial viability, and morale must be fortified by strong administrative leadership and faculty collaboration.

Boulding (1975) argued the great problem facing the education system during the next twenty years is the high probability of declining enrollments. Planning for managing this decline rests primarily with the administration of the educational institutions. Greater management skills are required for managing an institution in decline than are in growth. The manager is required to think of more creative things that have not been thought of or tried before. Finally, Boulding suggests that the educational industry

needs to mobilize the learning capacity that is implicit within itself to gain a quicker understanding of itself to avoid failing society.

President Scott of the N. C. Community College System stated that one of the great difficulties in planning is that the planning process is constrained by political considerations in terms of timing and philosophies. As an example of this he explained that a planning agency in government may develop a plan to cover an extended period of time but because of changes in the governorship as well as in the legislature, priorities established by individuals or groups of individuals could change thereby altering the intent of the plans.

One aspect of strategic planning is environmental or market analysis. President Scott stated that representatives of the N. C. Community College System had met with industry groups and asked these groups to respond to the questions of what the N. C. Community College System needs to be doing, what industry's needs are, and how NCCCS can prepare to meet the needs of industry ten years from now. President Scott also advocated more planning and coordinating effort with the public schools in an attempt to eliminate duplication and provide the opportunity for students in high school to continue their education at a local community college.

In his discussion of strategic planning, Scott sees the structure and process as a difficult part of strategic planning. Scott predicted a trend toward more centralization of community colleges and less local control. Scott forecast an increasing demand for accountability by the North Carolina General Assembly and those who have the responsibility for allocating resources. He stated that planning would be necessary to make many effective decisions because the community college system has limited resources and many of the programs that are offered are expensive. Decisions must be made regarding what programs are to be offered and this required strategic planning (Fullagar, 1987-88).

Peterson (1980), in his discussion of planning, argued that strategic and master planning are often considered synonymous but both usually encompass four areas: 1) environment assessment or scanning which attempts to identify trends or potential changes in the environment and possible implications for the institution, 2) institutional assessment which helps to define strengths, weaknesses, problems, and capabilities of the institution, 3) values assessment which takes into consideration the values, aspirations, and ideals of different constituencies and responsibilities of the institution to them and to the public, and 4) a master plan creation which is a devising of a

strategic pattern, design, or direction for the institution. According to Peterson, strategic planning involves policy decisions which are concerned among other things with the proposed mission, role, and scope of the institution and its objectives and goals.

Cosand (1980) argued that the development of an institutional master plan was vital to planning. Cosand contended, however, that the justifications for master planning must be made and defined to all concerned and involved in the planning process. In addition, the expectations for a master plan must be clearly defined and clearly communicated. According to Cosand, a change in college mission could be one facet of a master plan. Cosand contended that education for whom, and for what purpose are the basic questions a college mission must answer. Accomplishing this is a difficult part of the master plan because these changes will affect all other segments of the college. Cosand contended that the mission must be active, understood, and supported by all facets of the college.

Uhl (1983) proposed that strategic planning, long-range planning, and master planning are synonymous. Uhl described four major phases that should be included in any planning process: 1) the analysis phase, 2) the mission and goal phase, 3) the objectives and action-plan phase, and 4)

the resource-use, needs-analysis, and expenditure-strategies phase.

Uhl described the mission and goals phase as including the development of a mission statement and associated goals. This statement provides the purposes of the organization and should be reviewed and updated periodically. Uhl strongly supported the gathering and analysis of information as an important aspect of effective strategic planning.

Eadie (1982-83) argued that conventional long-range planning (known as "master" planning) is entirely different from the externally focused, innovation-oriented planning that is called "strategic." It is Eadie's opinion that previous long-range planning was designed to bring order to an unruly environment, not developing opportunities for innovation. The focus of master planning lay with describing the internal environment which generated shopping lists usually updating five-year goals. Eadie emphasized that short- and long-range planning are fundamentally different from innovation-centered planning--which he described as the "heart" of strategic planning.

Mission and Strategic Planning

Varian (1976) argued that the first step in planning is the establishment of the institution's mission and goals. The college then must develop a strategy that will guide the institution toward meeting these goals. Blashi and Davis (1986) constructed an Outcome Evaluation Model that is derived from a institutional mission statement and seeks to suggest measurements which provides the basis for both evaluative comment and comparisons with other institutions and norms.

Cross (1981) argued that it was not easy to define the purpose and mission of today's community colleges. He asked the question, "Can we be equal and excellent?" Cross identified five major themes that run through the current community college debate. These were identified as: 1) the comprehensive focus, 2) the vertical focus, 3) the horizontal focus, 4) the integrated focus, and 5) the remedial focus.

The comprehensive mission is the most popular one today and includes: 1) career education, 2) compensatory education, 3) community education, 4) collegiate functions, and 5) general education. According to Cross, the comprehensive mission is attractive to most community college educators because it avoids the controversy of setting

priorities and has become part of the community college tradition.

The vertical focus identified by Cross calls for establishing relationships with high schools to insure that high school graduates can perform college level work and for articulating with four-year institutions the requirements for transfer. The purpose of the vertical mission is to help students through the traditional system from high school through the community college to a baccalaureate degree.

The horizontal focus develops linkages with the community rather than building linkages within the formal educational establishment. In this mission, industry attempts to become a full partner in the educational mission. Cross predicts that the horizontal focus will challenge the vertical focus for predominance before the end of the decade. The integrated focus gives attention to linkages within the college itself rather than to external linkages that are either vertical or horizontal. A college emphasizing the integrated focus would emphasize multi-disciplinary courses, team teaching, and curriculum development across departmental lines. The integrated focus provides a continual liberal arts education for lifelong learning (Cross).

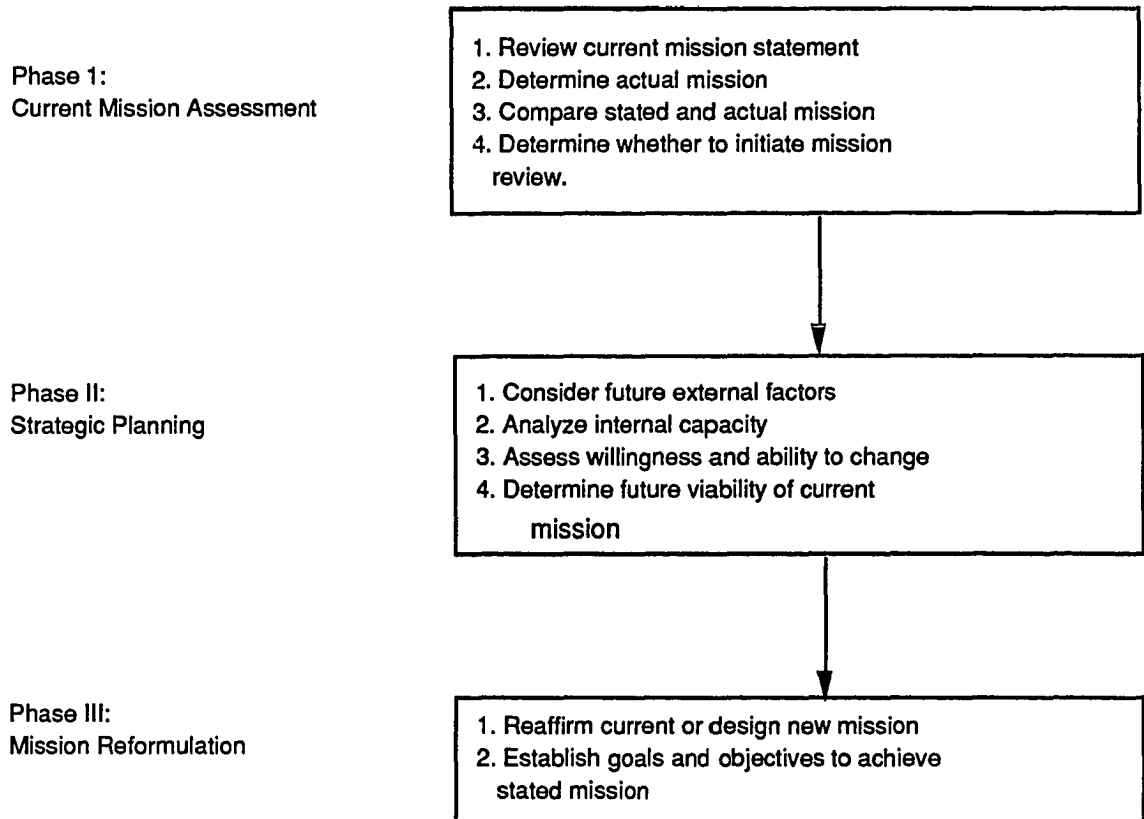
The remedial focus, according to Cross, has received little discussion and has been met with little enthusiasm by

community colleges. The remedial focus suggests that community colleges develop a comprehensive set of "youth service functions." Within these functions would be guidance, job preparation, job placement, apprenticeships, and almost any other type of service needed by young people. Cross sees two major problems with this type of proposal. First, community colleges have not been rewarded in the past for their social concern; and secondly, almost no college wants to be identified as an "institution for youth" (Cross, 1981, p. 44). Cross argued that the central challenge to community colleges in the future is the quality of education and this can only be achieved if there is central agreement on mission.

Parsons (1987) stated that developing the process of rediscovery is a major challenge of leadership facing community colleges. It is Parsons' contention that the integration of mission redefinition and future orientation is a logical strategy for facing the challenges of the 1990's.

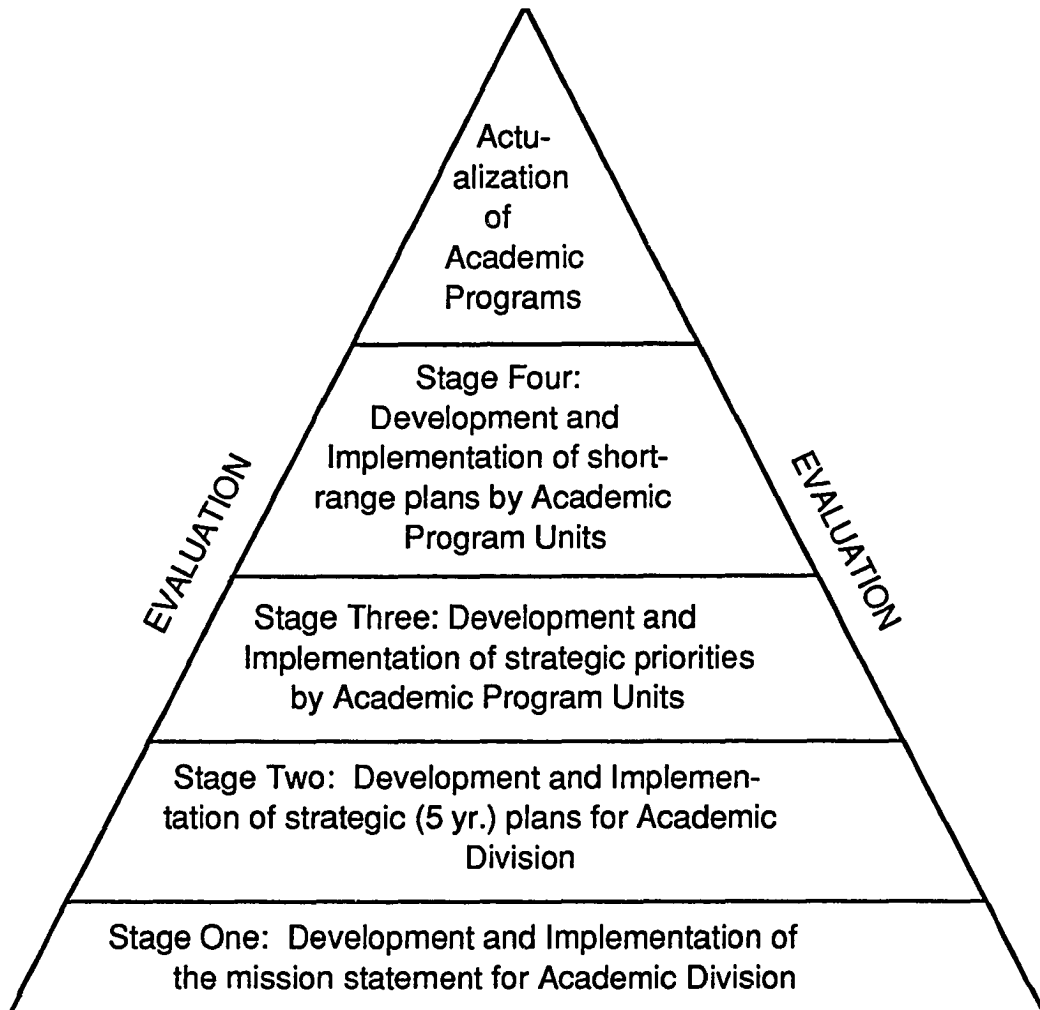
A strategic planning approach is demonstrated in Figure 1. It is affirmed by Parsons that successful mission redefinition and redirection require the integration of internal focus promoting change and external community factors reinforcing its importance.

FIGURE 1

A Strategic-Planning Approach to Mission Development

(Parsons, 1987)

In a strategic planning model proposed by Tack, Rentz, and Russell (1984), the development and implementation of a mission statement was paramount to the success of the planning process. This model demonstrated in Figure 2 involves the completion of four stages, is considered to be developmental, and is arranged in a hierarchy.

FIGURE 2**Major Stages of the Strategic Process Model**

(Tack, Rentz, and Russell, 1984)

Even though this model addresses strategic planning within academic divisions of universities, it is adaptable as a model for institution-wide strategic planning.

Robertson-Smith (1987) stated that a review of the literature on strategic planning reveals that one component is consistent: a general review of the mission of the organization in relationship to the activities. Robertson-Smith stated that one question is central to the effort: "Is this part of our mission or is this changing our mission?" (Robertson-Smith, 1987, p. 2). At the center of strategic planning is the matching of the mission with the strengths of the institution which enables alternatives to be developed that capitalize on presented opportunities (Robertson-Smith).

In a discussion of enrollment management, Mabry (1987) stated that one of the activities is the clarification of institutional mission. Enrollment management consists of defining goals and developing procedures to reach these goals. Enrollment management is used as a means of exercising control over the character and mission of individual institutions (Mabry).

Moseley (1980) discussed specifically the mission of the church-related college but stated that this discussion was applicable to higher education in the public sector, also. Moseley described five realities that affect the mission of both independent (church-related) institutions and public supported institutions: 1) the need to reorganize higher education's tradition of high expectations, support to society,

and impressive development over the years; 2) the need to recognize new conditions, new educational need, and new societal programs; 3) the need to better recognize the increasing media exposure of societal institutions, including higher education; 4) the threat to the freedom of an individual institution to have its own mission and its own diversity; and 5) the confusion about institutional mission. Moseley argued each campus must come to some agreement on what it is about and have the support commitment of all groups within and related to the college or university.

Moseley identified five elements that are essential to any mission statement: 1) the definition of the college, 2) the basic commitment of the college, 3) the educational philosophy, 4) the distinctiveness of the college, and 5) the general goals or objectives of the college. Moseley concluded that if the process of framing a mission statement obtains a general commitment and consensus to the college, then it may be one of the most needed and fundamental requirements of a college entering the 1980's. Moseley described five practical uses of a mission statement that are particularly significant for the church-related college. First, it can demonstrate the difference between the mission of the church and the mission of the college. Second, it can help the college focus on what it can do within the higher education setting. Third, the mission statement should be

used as a benchmark to evaluate the college. Fourth, it can free a college to accept challenges that are within its mission. Finally, the fifth use of a mission statement could be the most important of all. The statement and the process of developing it can serve as an instrument to draw all constituencies together and serve as an important basis and design for communications (Moseley).

Farley (1980) argued that a re-examination of institutional mission is important to higher education as it wrestles with the problems of projected enrollment declines and inflation. Farley stated the mission of community colleges has been misunderstood by some. This misunderstanding was fast bred in part because of the great variation among the colleges in origins, type of control and financing, and curricular configuration. However, Farley argued that the primary cause of identity confusion was the successful challenge the community colleges posed to the elite view of higher education. According to Farley, what distinguishes the mission of the community colleges are their community orientation, local character, and accessibility. This mission is now being confused because the distinction between community colleges and other institutions of higher education has become blurred. Farley stated that the future mission of community colleges should be an elaboration and strengthening of their original purpose: to

provide access of postsecondary education to a diverse population and to respond effectively to community concerns.

Christ-Janes (1980) concluded that the mission of an educational institution must be considered in terms of individual and societal needs and have both long- and short-term goals. According to Christ-Janes, various disciplines of the college community debate, discuss, and inform each other and corporately evolve a mission statement. In terms of retrenchment, it was Christ-Janes' opinion that the mission of an educational institution must have a practical view responding to current and future needs of society and the individual and taking into account the resources, strengths and capabilities of the individual.

In a discussion of mission and retrenchment, Schwerin (1980) asked a number of questions relating to the complexity of an institutional mission:

- 1) Is it a lofty ideal that espouses global concepts of educational commitment?
 - 2) Is it a broad statement of educational principal for a given institution?
 - 3) Is it a statement of educational direction seen within a context of reality?
 - 4) Should it be fixed, conceived in thought and language capable of transcending economic and demographic changes?
-

- 5) Should it be sufficiently flexible to be refocused in times of serious external pressures?
- 6) Should the mission statement be of an entirely qualitative nature or should it contain quantitative measurable aspects (Schwerin, 1980, p. 170)?

Schwerin discusses the relationship of mission and retrenchment. It is Schwerin's opinion that at no time should external pressures alone determine the reformulation of mission. Schwerin rejects a cause and effect relationship between mission and retrenchment and asserts that retrenchment can proceed without destroying the institutional mission. In fact, preservation of the mission should be vigorously pursued in the face of retrenchment. This may require a change to the approach needed for accomplishment. The successes of these approaches will affect the degree of retrenchment needed over a given period of time (Schwerin).

Pratt and Reichard (1980) discussed an institution's mission, goals, and objectives. It is their opinion that the mission changes infrequently and provides a long-term sense of identity to an institution. Goals, on the other hand, provide a sense of direction for the shorter term. Mission can generate goals, and goals can create objectives.

Lelong and Shirley (1984) focused on reasons for planning, key factors to be addressed in the planning process, forces and factors to be considered, and the

characteristics of an "ideal" planning process. Within the major issues addressed in planning, institutional mission is identified as an important part of the process. Lelong and Shirley state that the items addressed here should include the fundamental purposes of the institution.

In examining three major focal points for analysis in long-range planning, Lelong and Shirley again identify mission exploration as an important part of this process. In analyzing the external environment, Lelong and Shirley contend that each institution should attempt to examine major forces in the environment which affect its mission, clientele, goals, and important factors. In analyzing the internal environment, the institution should identify its strengths and weaknesses that will, among other things, determine its ability to fulfill its mission. The ideal planning process should link institutional mission, consequent actions, and intended outcomes and is a management function which applies to every unit of the organization and every important goal and issue (Lelong and Shirley).

In the Annual Summary of Program Review Activities (1983) which dealt with program planning and review activities of the California Postsecondary Education Commission, the following was stated relevant to mission:

An essential phase of academic planning is the development of missions statements in which campus set forth their own special purposes, goals,

strengths, and plans for the future...all in relation to their history, geographic location, and other distinctive features. Such statements are important exercises in institutional self-definition and, if periodically revised, provide direction for day-to-day decisions and future plans of individual campuses (California State Postsecondary Education Committee, 1983, p. 10).

Woodbury (1977) stated revised mission definitions for community colleges may be needed. Woodbury asks if community colleges should not determine their future role in postsecondary education before it is done for them? It is suggested by Woodbury that each community college should reexamine its role and determine its contribution to the postsecondary education partnership. Doing this might prevent a uniform mission's being defined for all community colleges (Woodbury).

Carpenter (1987) reported that many different methods of mission development have been used by the state's higher education systems. In a study by Carpenter, higher education systems in eight states were asked to respond indicating the process, responsibility, use, purpose, and satisfaction involved in the development of mission statements for their respective higher education institutions. Results indicated that in some states individual institutions drafted their own mission statements while in other states the governing boards were responsible for initiating mission development. It was reported that mission development at

the central board level was less likely to be satisfactory and difficult to adhere to. Institutions felt less "ownership" in this type of process. The preferred process appeared to be a shared approach that allowed local perspectives to be heard and examined within the context of state needs and priorities (Carpenter, 1987).

Anderson (1978) looked at small private colleges. He asked if a broader mission would increase applicant pools and ease financial stress. A more important question was would these changes affect the educational/cultural environment? With respect to broadening mission, the study suggests that the answer is complex. Broadening mission brought enrollment increases but was also accompanied by a loss in perceived educational distinctiveness (Anderson).

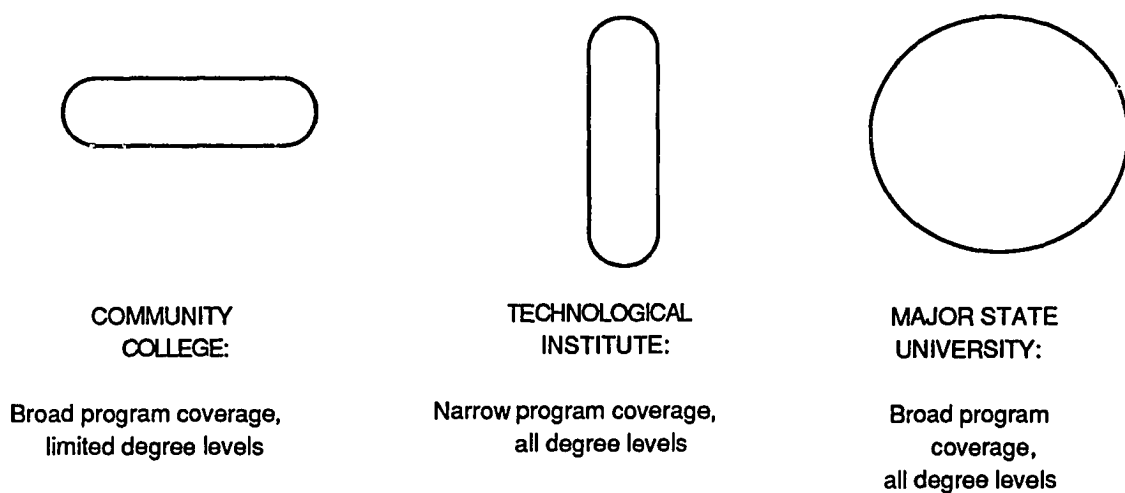
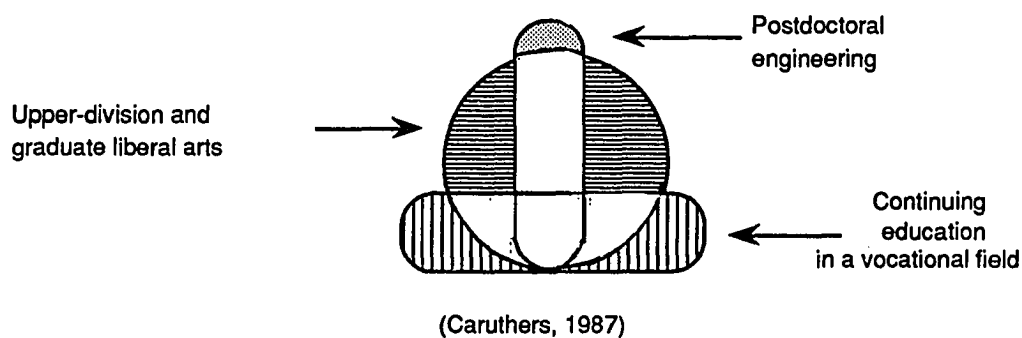
Caruthers (1987) stated that the "concept of mission" is fundamentally important for the functioning of higher education systems. Caruthers discussed how both system level and individual institutions address the concept of mission. According to Caruthers one of the major functions of a state level agency is to assist each institution within its jurisdiction in fulfilling its established mission. State agencies do possess a degree of power that encourages institutions to place their missions into effect. These criteria include budget formulas, establishment of admissions and

transfer policies, and the development of plans for continuing education (Caruthers).

Caruthers asserts that state-level higher education boards are beginning to take a more increasing role in strategic planning. An important product of strategic planning at the state level should be the evaluation of the current institutional missions in regard to how each institution contributes to the overall mission of the system.

Caruthers makes the point that one institution's mission often does not differ from another's mission. Figure 3 makes this point visually. Geometric representations of three different institutional roles and missions are presented, each with its own uniqueness; but when they are overlaid, it is demonstrated that institutions share many common concerns and responsibilities, helping to place the uniqueness issue in perspective (Caruthers).

Caruthers and Lott (1981) took an historical look at mission and its relation to the higher education system. According to the authors, during the Colonial era the mission definition of an institution was narrow and easily understood. That mission was to provide a liberal education to a select group of students and to offer training for entry into a few professions. Even when curriculum expanded, institutional missions remained stable.

FIGURE 3**A. Different Mission, Role, and Scope Identities****B. Areas of Unique Mission, Role, and Scope**

Changes began to take place for colleges and universities at the end of World War II. At this time, record numbers of students began to appear on college campuses. As colleges began to grow and diversify, they became more accountable for their effectiveness and efficiency. This era

of accountability required the recognition of a well understood mission for institutional planning (Caruthers and Lott).

Caruthers and Lott offered the opinion that American higher education is probably entering an era of retrenchment. This retrenchment originating as a result of declines forecast for enrollment and the shortage of tax dollars. According to Caruthers and Lott, as institutions enter this new era it is essential that institutions have a thorough knowledge of institutional mission. This is necessary to help them determine whether to expand, reduce, or change the college's programs and policy. Colleges will not be able to survive and continue their vitality without a clear understanding of their mission and related competencies (Caruthers and Lott).

Caruthers and Lott discussed mission review as being a foundation for planning and decision making. It is asserted by the authors that perhaps one of the important purposes of mission review is to achieve greater congruence between what the institution claims it is and what it actually is.

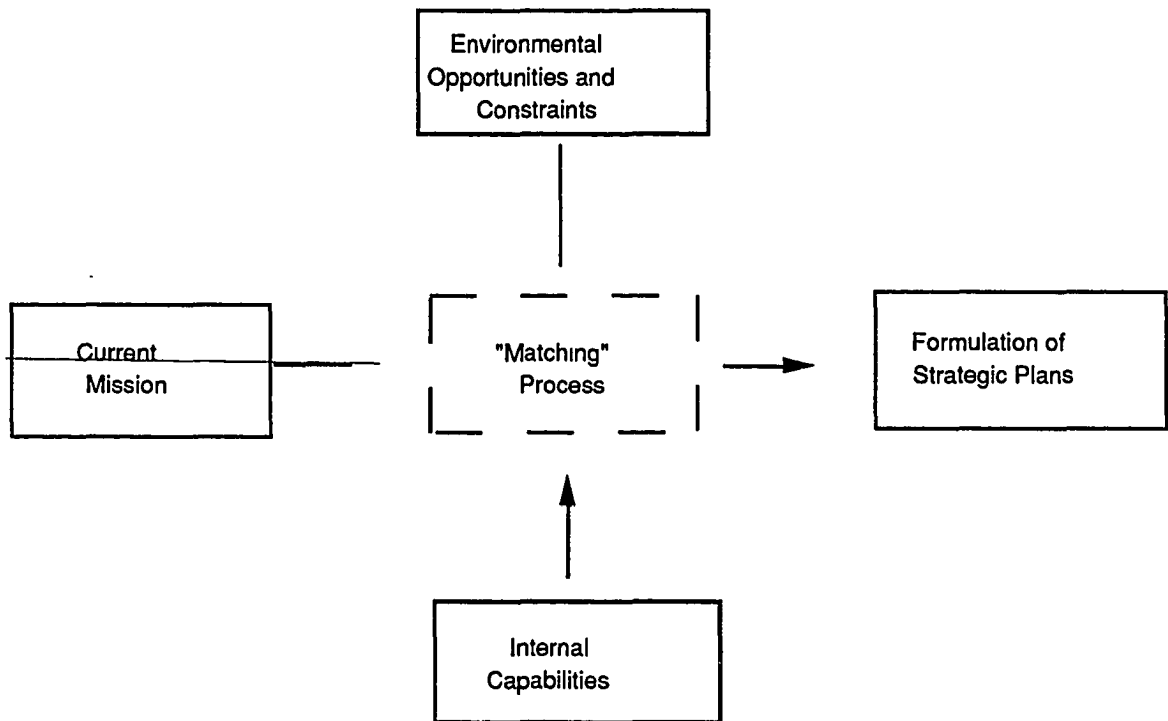
Strategic planning, according to Caruthers and Lott, is an approach which is designed to deal with the complex relationships that are a result of mission change and review. Figure 4 demonstrates a framework for strategic planning. Following this framework allows an organization

to seek the optimum alignment between environmental opportunities, the capacity of the institution, and the mission of the institution to help it achieve its goal. This strategic orientation to planning assumes that the mission of an institution can be redirected or changed and that new opportunities can be identified or created within the environment. Within this strategic planning framework, the external environment and the internal capacity are all functions of the strategic planning framework (Caruthers and Lott).

What necessary reasons provoke a mission review? Caruthers and Lott argue that some institutions review their mission based on the calendar and the requirements of regional accrediting team. Some of the questions to be used in determining if mission should be reevaluated is to ask if long-range decisions have made conflict with one another or existing mission statements, or if the institution's mission statement is seldom cited as a reason to take or not to take some proposed action, or if the institution really does the things that the statement suggests. All of these things should be taken into consideration when attempting to decide if a mission review is necessary.

FIGURE 4

A Strategic Planning Framework



(Caruthers and Lott, 1981)

A mission statement should report what the institution has been, what it shall become, and what it does not believe itself to be. This statement usually attempts to communicate with two types of audiences: external and internal. Figure 4 demonstrates the mission role and scope of a current mission-related activity determined by a plan of action in establishing goals and objectives which allow the institution to move to its desired mission role and scope. Caruthers and Lott make five important points about

mission review: 1) it can serve as an invaluable foundation for campus planning and budget activity, 2) it requires careful organization and broad involvement, 3) it is most successful when approached from a strategic planning perspective, 4) it is continuing to grow in importance at the state level, and 5) it should receive increased attention in institutional planning.

Caruthers and Lott state:

For an institution to remain effective and self-renewed, a clear sense of purpose is essential. A clear understanding of the what and why of an institution's mission allows decision makers at all levels to contribute toward the development of an effective and valued institution. (p. 65)

Summary

The development and growth of the national community college movement has taken place during the twentieth century. It was established to fill a void in the higher education system which was the lack of vocational and technical training. Over 1,000 community colleges now exist in the United States, providing a variety of programs. Over the years, these colleges have been required to change their missions and courses of action as economics, needs, and other factors have dictated.

The North Carolina Community College has been a vital part of the national community college movement, having

celebrated twenty-five years of existence in May, 1988. The North Carolina system served over 600,000 adults in credit and non-credit programs during 1987-88. There are now fifty-eight community and technical colleges located across the state.

One of the member institutions of the North Carolina system is Tri-County Community College, located in extreme southwestern North Carolina. This small school reflects the mission and purpose of the North Carolina system as a whole.

In establishing a definition of perception, it was restricted to the quality, relations, observations, and judgments made by an individual concerning those things around him. In perceiving, an individual interprets, discriminates, and identifies conditions experienced to be existing in the environment.

Strategic planning evolved from both a military and economic background and has now moved into the academic world of higher education. Academic strategic planning is difficult to define but it is commonly agreed that both the internal and external environments of the institution should be examined and causes of action decided upon after these examinations. It is argued that higher education is entering a period of retrenchment, and strategic planning is the proper way to deal with this issue.

One theme runs throughout the discussion of strategic planning: the importance of mission development, exploration, review, and redefinition. Dealing with this issue is paramount to the success of the strategic planning process.

Mission examination enables an institution to determine where it has been, what it has done, and what it shall become.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

The preceding chapter provided the background information necessary for an investigation of community college mission as perceived by selected internal and external groups within the Tri-County Community College community. The population chosen for this study was selected from the following areas: 1) senior administrators of Tri-County Community College, 2) full-time faculty members of Tri-County Community College, 3) high school principals in the service area, 4) public school superintendents in the service area, 5) county commissioners, and 6) representatives of industry. All groups were surveyed as total populations.

Members of both the internal and external groups were chosen for the study because of their significant relationship to the college. A total of sixty-one subjects were selected; twenty-one subjects represented the internal group and forty subjects represented the external group.

The internal group consisted of the following:

- 1) Administrators of TCCC. The administrative group consisted of senior administrators at TCCC. The total population was four senior administrators.
- 2) Faculty of TCCC. The faculty group was comprised of seventeen full-time faculty members at TCCC.

The external group consisted of the following three sub-groups:

- 1) School personnel. The school personnel sub-group included school superintendents and high school principals. The population included three school superintendents and five high school principals for a total population of eight.
- 2) County commissioners. The county commissioner sub-group consisted of three commissioners from each county within the college's three-county service area. The total population for this group was nine commissioners.
- 3) Industry representatives. Industries that employed more than twenty-five persons were used as basis for the selection of industry representatives. For industries employing both a personnel manager and plant manager, both were included in the study. The total population for the industry group was

sixteen plant managers and seven personnel managers.

Instrument

The instrument used in this study was a Likert-type questionnaire designed by the researcher. It consisted of four parts and requested the subjects to respond to twenty-seven items.

The instrument was field-tested by requesting three individuals to complete the questionnaire in an attempt to identify major problems. The revised instrument was then administered to a small sample representative of the intended population of the study. These pre-tested subjects were encouraged to make suggestions and comments concerning directions, clarity, and overall content of the instrument. The questionnaire was revised again and mailed to the respondents.

The measuring instrument was designed to elicit responses on five questions:

- 1) did a statistically significant difference exist between the internal group and the external group's perception of TCCC's current mission?;
- 2) did a statistically significant difference exist between the internal group and the external group's perception of TCCC's current mission effectiveness?;

- 3) did a statistically significant difference exist between the internal group's and the external group's perception of the future mission of TCCC?
- 4) did a statistically significant relationship exist among and between the internal and external group's sub-groups priority rankings of current and future mission items?; and
- 5) did a statistically significant relationship exist between the internal and external group's priority rankings of current and future mission items?

Part I of the instrument asked the respondents to answer six questions designed to collect demographic data reflecting the subject's representative group, length of time in the position, age, sex, and educational level obtained. The subjects were also asked to indicate their level of understanding of the mission of Tri-County Community College (Appendix A).

Part II of the instrument dealt with the respondent's perception of TCCC's current mission, its effectiveness in fulfilling that mission, and if that specific item should be a part of TCCC's future mission. Items selected for response were derived from the mission/purpose statement found in the 1989-90 TCCC school catalogue and handbook. A Likert-type scale was used and respondents were requested to respond within the range of "strongly agree," to "strongly

disagree" on each selected mission item. Thirteen mission items were selected; the respondents were requested to make three separate responses on each item for a total of thirty-nine responses.

Part III of the questionnaire requested that the respondents rank in order of importance their perceptions of TCCC's current emphases on six selected mission items. Respondents were also asked to use the same scale to rank their perceptions of TCCC's needed future emphasis on the selected mission items. On the ranking scale, number one was used as "most important" and number six as "least important."

Part IV of the instrument was designed to gather data regarding the respondent's knowledge on a number of issues including the relationship of mission to strategic planning, the funding process of the North Carolina Community College System, the comprehensiveness of the community college system, and the question of "ownership" as it relates to the geographic location of Tri-County Community College. Six statements and questions were used to collect this data.

Procedure and Design

The population groups for the study were identified as having an interest in the mission of Tri-County Community College. A letter from the researcher accompanied each

questionnaire mailed to the respondents (Appendix B). Included in this letter was an explanation of why the study was being conducted and the importance of their participation. The respondents were assured that their identity and that of the organizations they represented would be protected in the study. The respondents were requested to return the questionnaire in two weeks and a self-addressed stamped envelope was included for their convenience. Respondents were encouraged to contact the researcher regarding any questions or directions needed to complete the questionnaire. Two weeks following the initial mailing, a reminder was sent to those subjects whose questionnaires had not been returned. This procedure resulted in an additional six being returned.

All groups in the study were surveyed as a total population. No random sampling was done due to the relative small size and accessibility of the population.

The design for the research procedure was a descriptive method intended to collect ordinal data by use of a Likert-type scale, rank order data, and follow-up interviews. The study was designed to collect data relative to three categories: 1) the respondent's perception of TCCC's current mission, 2) the respondent's perception of TCCC's effectiveness in fulfilling that mission, and 3) the respondent's perception of what TCCC's future mission should

be. A statistical analysis was performed on the data to determine if significant differences existed between the internal and external group.

Follow-up interviews were conducted with individuals who were representative of each group involved in the study. The interviews served as a method to collect additional data regarding the subject's views on mission and strategic planning, the development and expansion of future relationships between TCCC and the interviewees respective group, and the role of TCCC in aiding in the economic development of its service area.

Data Analysis

The data collected for each respondent were tabulated for each category. The information was double-checked for accuracy prior to the application of the statistical analysis. The data was processed on a MacIntosh computer using the StatView 512+ statistical program. The analytical treatments of the data included:

- 1) A simple percentage calculation on Part I and Part IV of the questionnaire to determine the percentage of respondents who fell into each category.
- 2) Chi square values were computed on Part II of the questionnaire to determine if statistically significant differences existed between the group's perception of

TCCC's current mission, current mission effectiveness, and future mission. Chi square is an appropriate, non-parametric test of significance when the data are in the form of frequency counts occurring in two or more mutually exclusive categories (Gay, 1987).

- 3) Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficients were computed for Part III of the questionnaire. The analysis was computed to determine if the study groups differed significantly in their ratings of the perceived current and future emphasis on selected mission parts. The Spearman rho is an appropriate measure of correlation when the data represent an ordinal scale and are expressed in ranks instead of scores (Gay, 1987).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

An analysis of the data collected from the survey and from five interviews with representatives of the surveyed groups is discussed in this chapter. This data serves as the basis from which conclusions regarding perception of current mission, future mission, and mission effectiveness of a community college can be drawn.

The first section of this chapter contains a discussion of the demographic information gathered on the respondent's age, length of time in service in their current job position, educational level attained, and their reported understanding of the mission of Tri-County Community College.

The second section of this chapter presents the findings of the survey items and an analysis of the data as it relates to the research questions. This discussion includes Part II and Part III of the survey and the data analysis applied to each. Tables are used to aid in the representation of the data.

A discussion of the results obtained on a number of different items is contained in the third section of this

chapter. This section presents responses to a number of questions including defined mission and planning, funding, and "ownership."

Section four of this chapter presents information gathered from interviews conducted with selected representatives of the various groups included in the study. The interviewees were determined by the researcher to be in a position to have significant relationships with the college.

Response Rate

A total of fifty-four responses were received out of a total of sixty-one surveys mailed yielding a response rate of eighty-nine percent. A response rate of seventy percent was determined to be acceptable prior to the study.

Table 1
Response Rates by Group

Group	Questionnaires		Response Rate %
	Sent	Returned	
Community college administrators	4	4	100
Community college faculty	17	15	88
School personnel	8	8	100
County Commissioners	9	6	67
Industry representatives	23	21	91
Total	61	54	89

Table 1 indicates the numbers of questionnaires mailed to each group and the response rate. The total response rate for the population is also indicated.

Demographic Data

Data was collected on the respondent's age, sex, length of service in their present position, educational level, and their understanding of the mission of Tri-County Community College. A percentage breakdown is provided in the following tables:

Table 2
Years of Service in Position

	Fa*	Ad*	In*	Ps*	Cc*
0-5	20	0	27	50	100
6-10	27	0	37	50	0
11-15	33	25	21	0	0
16-20	20	75	5	0	0
21-25	0	0	5	0	0
25+	0	0	5	0	0

*In all tables, the following abbreviations are used: Fa = Faculty, Ad = Administration, In = Industry, Ps = Public school, and Cc = County commissioners.

According to the data presented in Table 2, public school personnel and county commissioners have the fewest years of service in their present positions.

Table 3
Age

	Fa	Ad	In	Ps	Cc
20-25	0	0	0	0	0
26-35	7	0	20	40	0
36-45	71	25	27	40	0
46-55	12	50	37	20	50
56-65	0	25	16	0	40
65+	0	0	0	0	10

Table 3 indicates that all the county commissioners surveyed fell into the age categories from 46-55 to 65+.

Table 4
Sex

	Fa	Ad	In	Ps	Cc
Female	24	0	17	0	0
Male	86	100	83	100	100

According to Table 4, the industry representatives group had the lowest percentage (83%) male, with three groups being 100% male.

Table 5
Educational Level Obtained

	Fa	Ad	In	Ps	Cc
High School	0	0	12	0	50
Attended College	33.3	0	23	0	0
Baccalaureate Degree	13.3	25	47	0	33.3
Advanced Degree	53.3	75	18	100	16.6

In Table 5, the data shows the faculty, industry, and county commissioner groups with an even distribution in the educational level attained. The administrative and public school groups primarily fell into the advanced level of training.

Table 6
Understanding of TCCC Mission

	Fa	Ad	In	Ps	Cc
Fully understand	53	75	35	33.3	14
Some understanding	47	25	59	66.6	72
Do not understand	0	0	6	0	14

Table 6 indicates that the internal group (faculty and administration) feel they have a higher degree of understanding of the mission of TCCC than members of the external group. . The data indicate of the external group that six percent of industry personnel and fourteen percent

of the county commissioners felt they did not understand the mission of TCCC.

Research Question's Findings

Research Question #1: Are there statistically significant differences between the internal group and external group's perception of TCCC's current mission?

The research hypothesis for this question states that the responses made were independent of each other. A chi-square analysis was performed on the data with significance determined to be at the .05 level. In those cases with a degree of freedom of one, the chi-squares values were computed after a Yate's correction for continuity was applied. According to Elzey (1971) the "Yates correction for continuity need only be applied in cases where you have only one degree of freedom" (Elzey, p. 320). This was necessary due to a void in some of the frequency cells.

The data indicates that on eight of thirteen statements, the groups "agree" on responses to statements of current mission. To "agree" meant that the hypothesis (that responses are independent) is rejected. Statements that were significant were: 1a) ...provide vocational and technical training; 2a) ...provide college transfer program; 3a) ...achieve educational excellence through expansion of program; 5a) ...emphasis on Literacy Training; 6a) ...emphasis on personal enrichment and cultural programs;

9a) ...maintain cooperative agreements with public school;
 10a) ...maintain articulation between college and other
 higher education institutions; and 13a) ...provide
 information services to community. Table 7 reveals the
 responses that were significant and their chi-square values.
 On five of thirteen statements, the results were
 inconclusive.

Table 7
 Chi-square values of frequencies
 of perceived current mission.

Mission Statement	X2 Value
1a	5.062
2a	15.891
3a	38.393
5a	4.320
6a	32.111
9a	14.947
10a	5.333
13a	6.000

Research Question # 2: Are there statistically significant differences between the internal and external group's perception of TCCC's current mission effectiveness?

The research hypothesis states that the responses made are independent of each other. On twelve of thirteen statements the groups "agree" and the hypothesis is rejected. Table 8 indicates the following statements were

significant at the .05 level: 1b) ...effectively providing vocational and technical training; 2b) ...effectively providing college transfer program; 3b) ...effectively achieving educational excellence through program expansion; 4b) ...effectively aiding in economic development or service area; 6b) ...effectively maintaining strong personal and cultural enrichment program; 7b) ...effectively maintaining strong programs to business and industry; 8b) ...effectively continuing to evaluate educational needs; 9b) ...effectively maintaining cooperative agreements with public schools; 10b) ...effectively maintaining articulation between college and other higher education institutions; 11b) ...effectively operating under "open door" policy; 12b) ...effectively providing career guidance and counseling; and 13b) ...effectively providing informational services to community.

Table 8
Chi-square values of frequencies
of perceived
current mission effectiveness

Mission Statement	X2 Value
1b	8.481
2b	50.767
3b	15.667
4b	30.048
6b	12.591
7b	8.350
8b	27.000
9b	100.700
10b	21.250
11b	18.500
12b	21.250
13b	58.086

Research Question #3: Are there statistically significant differences between the internal group and external group's perception of TCCC's future mission?

The research hypothesis states that the responses are independent of each other. On eight of thirteen statements the groups "agree" and the research hypothesis is rejected. Table 9 indicates those statements significant at the .05 level: 1c) ...should provide vocational and technical training; 2c) ...should provide college transfer program; 3c) ...should achieve educational excellence through program expansion; 6c) ...should maintain strong personal enrichment and cultural programs; 10c) ...should maintain articulation between the college and other higher education

institutions; 11c) ...should operate under "open door" policy; 12c) ...should provide career guidance and counseling; and 13c) ...should provide informational services to community.

Table 9
Chi-square values of frequencies
of perceived
future mission

Mission Statement	X2 Value
1c	4.090
2c	10.581
3c	22.820
6c	19.686
10c	6.025
11c	10.167
12c	6.600
13c	14.091

An analysis of specific questions provides additional data.

All sub-groups indicated that TCCC was effectively providing a college transfer program except the industry sub-group. Their responses revealed that forty-five percent agreed, forty-four percent were undecided, and eleven percent disagree with this statement.

Varied responses were received from all sub-groups on the statement that "TCCC is effectively achieving educational

excellence through expansion of its educational programs." Table 10 indicates the response rate by percentage.

Table 10
Achieving Educational Excellence

	Fa	Ad	In	Ps	Cc
Agree	38	50	47	50	80
Undecided	31	0	35	50	20
Disagree	31	50	18	0	0

A comparison of the data for the statement that "TCCC is effectively aiding in the economic development of its service area" reveals that within the internal group, fifty-three percent of the faculty agreed, seven percent were undecided, and forty percent disagreed. Fifty percent of the administrators response agreed with this statement and fifty percent disagreed.

All sub-groups agreed that TCCC should provide Literacy training with eighteen percent of the industry sub-group disagreeing with this statement. Forty-seven percent of the industry sub-group, and twenty-five percent of the administrators sub-group were undecided if TCCC should place emphasis on personal enrichment and cultural programs.

Seventy-six percent of the industry sub-group indicated that TCCC is effectively providing strong

educational programs to industry, twelve percent were undecided, and twelve percent disagreed.

Table 11 indicates the responses regarding TCCC's "effectively continuing to evaluate the educational needs of the community."

Table 11
Evaluating Educational Needs

	Fa	Ad	In	Ps	Cc
Agree	33	50	71	80	80
Undecided	33	0	12	20	20
Disagree	33	50	17	0	0

Seventeen percent of the public school sub-group disagreed with the statement that TCCC was currently "effectively maintaining cooperative agreements with public schools. Twenty-seven percent of the faculty and fifty percent of the administrators also disagreed with this statement.

The majority of all responses indicated that part of TCCC's future mission should be "to provide informational services to the community that promotes an understanding of its needs and accomplishments." Table 12 indicates differences between the responses of TCCC's current effectiveness in providing this service.

Table 12
Providing Informational Services

	Fa	Ad	In	Ps	Cc
Agree	27	50	65	66	60
Undecided	20	25	29	16	20
Disagree	53	25	6	16	20

Perceived Importance of Mission by Ranking

In order to gather additional data regarding the internal and external group's perception of current and future mission of TCCC, respondents were asked to rank in order of importance their perception of TCCC's current mission and what TCCC's future mission should be. This procedure limited the use of the mission items to be ranked to six. These items were used by the researcher because of their relationship to the offering of educational programs. The Spearman rho rank order correlation coefficient was calculated for a comparison of groups and sub-groups. The Spearman rho .886 was used to determine the significance level of .05.

Research Question #4: Does a statistically significant difference exist between the internal and external sub-group's rating of current and future mission items?

The research hypothesis for this procedure stated that:

- 1) there will be no significant correlation for the rank-ordering between the internal group sub-group's

- (faculty and administrators) perception of TCCC's current mission,
- 2) there will be no significant correlation for the rank-ordering among the external groups sub-group's (industry representatives, school personnel, and county commissioners) perception of TCCC's current mission,
 - 3) there will be no significant correlation for the rank-ordering between the internal groups sub-group's (faculty and administrators) perception of TCCC's future mission,
 - 4) there will be no significant correlation for the rank-ordering among the external groups sub-group's (industry representatives, school personnel, and county commissioners) perception of TCCC's future mission,

Hypothesis one and two are accepted. Hypothesis three and four exceed .886 (.05 level) and are rejected. In Table 13, the Spearman rho correlation coefficient is indicated for all sub-groups (faculty, administration, public schools, county commissioners, and industry representatives).

Table 13
Spearman rho Correlation Coefficient Among Sub-Groups

	Current	Future
Faculty and Administration	.841	.943
Public Schools and Industry	.714	1.000
County Commissioners & Industry	.429	.696
Public Schools & County Commissioners	.447	.696

Table 14 indicates the sub-groups rank-ordering of current mission.

Table 14
Current Mission

	Fa	Ad	In	Ps	Cc
College Transfer	1	2	3	2	3
Literacy Skills	3	3	2	3	1
Vocational & Technical Training	2	1	1	1	4
Non-Credit Industry Program	4	4	4	6	5
Evaluate Needs	6	5	5	5	2
Non-Credit Cultural Program	4	6	6	4	6

Table 15 reveals the rank-ordering between the internal and external sub-group's perception of future mission.

Table 15
Future Mission

	Fa	Ad	In	Ps	Cc
College Transfer	2	3	2	2	4
Literacy Skills	4	4	3	3	3
Vocational & Technical Training	1	1	1	1	1.5
Non-Credit Industry Program	5	5	5	5	5
Evaluate Needs	3	2	4	4	1.5
Non-Credit Cultural Program	6	6	6	6	6

Table 16 indicates the rank-ordering of current mission between the internal and external groups. The data reveals that the internal group perceives the current emphasis as being placed on the college transfer program and the external group perceives primary importance being placed on vocational and technical training.

Table 16
Current Mission

	Internal group	External group
College transfer program	1	3
Literacy skills	3	2
Vocational and technical training	2	1
Non-credit programs for industry	4	5
Continually evaluate educational needs of community	5	4
Non-credit personal and cultural enrichment program	6	6

Table 17 reveals the rank-ordering comparison of future mission between the internal and external group. Comparison of the data for future mission reveals that the internal and external group are in basic agreement regarding where future emphasis should be placed.

Table 17
Future Mission

	Internal group	External group
College transfer program	2	2
Literacy skills	4	3
Vocational and technical training	1	1
Non-credit programs for industry	5	5
Continually evaluate educational needs of community	3	4
Non-credit personal and cultural enrichment program	6	6

Research Question #5: Does a statistically significant relationship exist between the internal and external group's ratings of current and future mission items?

The research hypothesis for this procedure stated that:

- 1) there will be no significant correlation for the rank-ordering between the internal and external group's perception of the current mission of TCCC, and
- 2) there will be no significant correlation for the rank-ordering between the internal and external group's perception of the future mission of TCCC.

Hypothesis one is accepted. Hypothesis two exceeds .886 (.05 level) and is rejected. Table 18 indicates the Spearman rho correlation coefficient between the internal and external groups.

Table 18
Spearman rho Correlation Coefficient Between Groups

	Current	Future
Internal and External	.771	.943

A comparison of the data in Table 19 indicates that the internal group ranks the college transfer program, vocational and technical training, and literacy training one, two, and three respectively on current mission. Future mission rankings place vocational and technical training, first; college transfer, second; and evaluating the community educational needs, third. The data indicates general agreement among the external group ranking of current and future mission.

Table 19
Rank-Ordering Between Internal and External Groups

	<u>Internal Group</u>		<u>External Group</u>	
	Current	Future	Current	Future
College transfer	1	2	2	2
Literacy skills	3	4	3	3
Voc. & tech. training	2	1	1	1
Non-cred. industry prog.	4	5	5	5
Continually evaluate needs	5	3	4	4
Non-cred. enrichment prog.	6	6	6	6

Part IV of the questionnaire asked for responses on the following questions:

1. How important do you feel that a clearly defined mission is for effective planning? Table 20 reveals that the groups indicated that defined mission was very important to effective planning.

Table 20
Defined Mission

	Fa	Ad	In	Ps	Cc
Very Important	79	75	88	83	50
Important	21	25	12	17	50
Not Important	0	0	0	0	0

2. How well do you understand the funding process of the N. C. Community College System? Table 21 indicates a varied understanding of the funding process. All

administrators indicated a full understanding of the funding process, county commissioners some understanding, and the remainder of the groups indicating a variable range of understanding.

Table 21
Funding Process

	Fa	Ad	In	Ps	Cc
Fully Understand	7	100	6	0	0
Some Understanding	79	0	41	83	100
Do Not Understand	2	0	53	17	0

3. Do you feel that the N. C. Community College System is attempting to become too comprehensive (to be everything for everyone)? The data in Table 22 indicates a varied distribution of responses on this question. A larger percentage of the internal group answered this question in the negative.

Table 22
Comprehensive Community College

	Fa	Ad	In	Ps	Cc
Yes	29	0	44	33.3	50
No	71	100	56	66.6	50

4. Is TCCC located in the county in which you reside?
Table 23 indicates the percentage of respondents who live in the county in which TCCC is located.

Table 23
Geographical Location of College

	Fa	Ad	In	Ps	Cc
Yes	43	100	76	43	33.3
No	57	0	24	57	66.6

6. Do you feel that residents share a greater degree of "ownership" toward the college when it is located in their respective county? Table 24 reveals that all groups indicated that location of the college did determine degree of "ownership."

Table 24
Ownership

	Fa	Ad	In	Ps	Cc
Yes	56	75	81	83	100
No	44	25	19	17	0

Summary

The data indicates that the internal and external groups agreed on their perceptions of eight of thirteen

current mission items. There was agreement between the groups on twelve of thirteen items relating to their perceptions of TCCC's current mission effectiveness. According to the data, the groups agreed on eight of thirteen statements relating to the college's future mission.

No significant correlation existed among and between the sub-group's and group's ranking of current mission items. On the ranking of future mission items, a significant correlation did exist, however, indicating a significant relationship among and between the group's perception of what TCCC's future direction should be.

Five Follow-up Interviews

"Progressive" describes Scotty Penland, School Superintendent of Clay County Schools. Penland, who has served in this position for eight years, was selected as being representative of the public school sub-group due to his length of tenure in the position, his reputation as a good administrator, and his willingness to share his ideas.

In discussing planning, Penland relayed that public schools are required to plan at different levels and stages to meet accreditation, as well as, individual plans in special programs. This planning investigates where the school system is and where it wants to go.

When asked about public school's and community college's both offering vocational training, Penland responded that the ideal situation would be for public schools to "get out" of vocational training. He supports the concept of children starting school at age four, go until age sixteen and graduate, then students can take vocational courses at community colleges. Penland forecasts, however, that as long as schools are serving to age eighteen, vocational training keeps them in school.

It was Penland's opinion that public schools have broadened their mission over the years. They have become an extension of the home, expected to provide more services. Penland contends that public schools, community colleges, and the university system each have their separate mission and particular place within the educational system.

Continue to be diverse is how Penland sees the community college mission. He feels that he has some understanding of its purpose but would like to "sit down around a table" in order to foster better communication regarding what public schools and community colleges could and should do to better work together.

"Children are our future," stated Chester Crisp, former educator, and now a member of the Graham County, N.C., Board of County Commissioners. Crisp was alluding to the recent successful passage of a school bond issue designed to

provide much improved school facilities in his native county. Crisp, serving his first term as a commissioner, is no stranger to education. He served over thirty years in public schools including his last nine as a principal.

In discussing the community college system, Crisp stated that community colleges now enjoy a reasonably good understanding of their mission by officials like himself. It was Crisp's opinion that this understanding is necessary in order for funding bodies like county commissioners to know where to place their priorities. Crisp did state, however, that he would be in favor of discussing with community college officials the college's mission and anticipated future direction.

Graham County does not have a community college located within the county. Crisp believes that residents do feel a greater degree of "ownership" toward a college when it is located in the county in which they reside. He added, however, that funding was not tied to this issue but would be very interested in having a satellite campus located in his county.

John Bandy, Dean of Students at Tri-County Community College, had a concise definition of mission. According to Bandy, the college's mission is to train individuals to become more employable. Bandy was selected to be interviewed due to his years of service as a

community college administrator. It was Bandy's opinion that staff, faculty, and administrators must be "schooled" in what the school's mission is and be willing to accept and become a part of it. Bandy reported that if individuals or groups do not believe in the college's mission, they are a hindrance to the organization. Having a well-defined mission is extremely necessary, according to Bandy.

Even though vocational training is considered part of the community college's primary mission, enrollment is down. Bandy attributed part of the decline to the fact that many students did not want to become part of what Bandy labels "dirty hands occupations."

It was Bandy's opinion that more effort should be directed toward evaluating community educational needs and providing more information to the community regarding TCCC's needs and accomplishments. He feels that it is important to keep people informed because they are taxpayers and are "footing" the bill.

It was stated by Bandy that educational excellence can be achieved through expansion of programs, but present programs must be evaluated to ensure that they are viable and needed.

Bandy, who has nineteen years of experience in community college administration, is a strong advocate of

planning. Planning means to him strong leadership and is a "must" for the future.

Gene Jole, plant manager at Outboard Marine Corporation-Andrews, was chosen as a follow-up interview because of his expressed interest in education and the working relationship between his company and the college. He is a proponent of education, believing that a better educated individual makes a better employee. He finds it hard to believe, but true that students graduate from high school unable to perform the basic academic skills needed in a work setting. Jole stated that he had been at four different plants and this had been true at all of them. According to Jole, community colleges should get out of the GED "business," this responsibility should be placed back upon the high schools.

Jole is an advocate of strategic planning. In his office is a strategic plan for OMC-Andrews that includes a mission statement, operating philosophy, and stated objectives that are necessary to fulfill the mission. Management reviews the mission periodically and updates it as needed. According to Jole, business must be flexible and willing to change. Jole stated "Without change, you die."

In discussing the future relationship of industry and community colleges, Jole argued that education and

industry must start planning in the 1990's for the changes in the year 2000.

Jole feels strongly that America is a society of "economic illiterates." Employees enter the work force with little or no knowledge regarding economics of the world of business. This education should take place in the seventh or eighth grades, according to Jole.

It is possible that small colleges such as TCCC are trying to serve too many masters, Jole believes. They are trying to serve industry, prepare students to transfer to four-year colleges, do literacy training, and a multitude of other services. Jole sees this as possibly an impossible task.

In concluding his remarks Jole stated, "Perception is all there is. It doesn't matter what the facts are, what people perceived to be true, is what the truth is to them. It is important to determine what perceptions are, then if they are wrong, try to change them through correct information."

John Cabe feels that planning is essential in any organization, especially in education. Cabe, social science instructor at TCCC, was selected to be interviewed due to his active role in faculty affairs and his present position as chairman of the Institutional Effectiveness committee at Tri-County Community College.

To Cabe, part of effective planning is having a defined mission. It is Cabe's opinion that part of the success of fulfilling that mission comes from members of the organization sharing in its concept.

Cabe feels that an institution should continually evaluate the community's educational needs. Failure to do this results in the college "operating by the seat of its pants," according to Cabe. An institution should keep the general public and funding agencies informed of its needs and accomplishments, Cabe stated. It is also important that the college be aware of the perceptions of these various groups, according to Cabe.

Cabe supports the "open door" philosophy of North Carolina's Community Colleges but states that this creates some problems. It is his opinion that if colleges operate by this concept, the administration must accept that not everyone will succeed. In looking toward the future, Cabe sees college transfer programs growing because of financial benefits of community colleges. He firmly believes, however, the vocational training should not be abandoned.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine how faculty and administrators, public school personnel, industry representatives, and county commissioners compared in their perceptions of a particular community college's current mission, mission effectiveness, and future mission.

Conclusions and Implications

The first research question was designed to determine if a statistically significant difference existed between the internal and external group's perception of TCCC's current mission. The data indicates that the internal and external groups agreed on eight of thirteen mission items as being part of TCCC's current mission. The eight statements related to: vocational and technical training, the college transfer programs, achieving excellence through expansion of programs, Literacy training, personal enrichment programs, cooperative agreements with public schools, articulation with colleges and universities, and providing informational services to the community. This suggested that both groups share a similar understanding of these mission items and perceive them as part of the college's current mission.

On five of thirteen current mission statements or thirty-eight percent, the groups did not agree on current mission items. These statements included: aiding in the economic development of the service area, non-credit programs to industry, evaluating educational needs of area, "open door" admission policy, and providing career counseling to students. This suggests one of the following conclusions: 1) a lack of understanding by the groups of the interpretation of the mission items, or 2) the groups share similar perceptions that these items should not be part of the college's current mission. Regardless of the conclusions drawn, one explanation might serve both issues; the college has not adequately made its mission known. TCCC's mission statement reflects the stated mission of the North Carolina Community College system and both are unlikely to change, therefore, the college should consider expanding its efforts in the direction of providing more information both internally and externally relative to its mission.

The second research question attempted to determine if a statistically significant difference existed between the internal and external group's perception of TCCC's current mission effectiveness. The internal and external groups agreed in their perceptions that the college was effectively providing the services currently being offered as part of

their mission with the exception of Literacy training. It cannot be concluded that the Literacy program is ineffective but is perceived to be by some members of the external group, particularly the industry sub-group. This finding indicates that the Literacy program should be evaluated in an attempt to determine if the negative perceptions are valid.

There was consensus of both the internal and external group's perception that the college was effectively fulfilling its current mission on the remaining twelve mission items. It should be noted, however, that some respondents within the faculty and administrative sub-groups did not perceive the College as effectively providing services in the following areas: 1) achieving excellence through expansion of its programs, 2) aiding in economic development, 3) evaluating educational needs, and 4) providing informational services to the community. This finding suggests that the College study these specific mission items more closely to identify reasons that would cause staff members to perceive the college as being less than effective in meeting these responsibilities.

The study attempted to determine with the third research question if a statistically significant difference existed between the internal and external group's perception of TCCC's future mission.

The groups agreed on responses in eight of thirteen future mission statements. These statements included: vocational and technical training, college transfer program, excellence through program expansion, personal enrichment and cultural programs, articulation with colleges and universities, "open door" policy, career guidance and counseling to students, and providing informational services to the community. This indicates that both the internal and external groups share a similar interpretation of these mission items and agree that they should be part of the college's future emphasis.

The groups did not agree on five of thirteen items as being part of the college's future mission. The items were: 1) to aid in economic development of area, 2) Literacy training, 3) provide non-credit programs to industry, 4) to evaluate educational needs of area, and 5) to maintain cooperative agreements with public schools. This suggests that additional research might be conducted in an effort to determine the reasons for the lack of consensus on these mission parts. One implication is that a lack of understanding of these mission items exists. This data also suggests that the College is inadequately promoting these aspects of its mission.

Interestingly enough, a lack of agreement existed on three of the items relating to both current and future

mission. These statements were: 1) aiding in economic development, 2) providing non-credit programs to industry, and 3) evaluating educational needs of community. Even though the possibility exists that respondents within the groups may perceive the interpretation of these mission statements differently, the data appears to suggest that these mission items are ones toward which the College should direct its attention. The data indicates that the College should attempt to determine its role in the economic development of the area. Secondly, it would appear that an evaluation of its non-credit programs to industry be conducted to determine if a lack of understanding exists relative to its purpose. Finally, it would appear that evaluating the educational needs of the community is vitally important. Meeting the educational needs of a community is difficult if those needs are not known.

The fourth research question was designed to determine if a statistically significant relationship existed among and between the internal and external group's sub-groups priority rankings of current and future items.

No significant relationship was found among the sub-groups relating to their perception of where current emphasis was being placed on mission items.

This implies that respondents are unsure of TCCC's current mission and that the college has not directed its

efforts toward developing its mission internally or externally.

All sub-groups agreed that vocational training should be the first priority of TCCC's future mission. Within the internal group, the administration and faculty ranked "evaluating educational needs" second and third respectively. This implies that the internal group feels that this mission item should be given attention in the future, ranking it ahead of non-credit educational programs.

The county commissioners sub-group also ranked this item as tied for first in future mission. This ranking is significant due to the fact that this sub-group is a funding source for the college.

The industry and public school's sub-groups were in total agreement on their rankings of future mission, indicating that the College's first priority should be vocational and technical training, the college transfer program of next importance, and Literacy training, third.

The final research question was designed to determine if a statistically significant relationship existed between the internal and external group's priority ranking of current and future mission items. Comparing the rankings of these items between the internal and external groups indicated no significant relationship. It is concluded from this data that the groups differ in their perceptions as to where the College

is currently placing its emphasis on mission items. This could indicate that the College is not placing more emphasis on one mission item than the other. More likely, however, is the explanation that the mission of the College is unclear to the respondents.

A comparison of the priority rankings relating to future mission indicates a strong relationship between the rankings of the internal and external groups. This data suggests a strong consensus between the groups regarding TCCC's future mission. It implies that the college could use these results to serve as an impetus for mission exploration and re-definition as part of the planning process.

Additional questions provided data on a number of issues. All sub-groups indicated that a well-defined mission was important to the planning process. This indicates a positive relationship between a defined mission and effective planning. One interpretation of these results implies that a lack of understanding of the funding process exists within the external sub-groups. The data also suggests that some of the industry and county commissioner's sub-groups lack an understanding of the mission of the college. On the issue of "ownership" it can be concluded that the majority of all sub-groups do feel that geographic location does influence this issue.

Recommendations

The findings of this study and the conclusions drawn from analyzing these findings resulted in the following recommendations:

- 1) Investigate the extent to which the mission of TCCC is understood by the general public in its service area.
- 2) Investigate the extent to which the general public feels community colleges are effectively fulfilling their mission.
- 3) Duplicate this study with colleges of similar geographical locations and size to determine if similar results are obtained.
- 4) Repeat this study in the same service area within five years to determine if changes have occurred in perceptions of community college mission.
- 5) Investigate the relationship of local funding to geographic location of the college.
- 6) Compare the perceptions of county commissioners on a statewide or regional basis measuring the understanding of the mission of the community college system.

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APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

I. Personal Data

1. In what capacity are you presently serving?

a. _____ Plant Manager

b. _____ Industrial Relations/Personnel Manager

c. _____ Faculty Member

d. _____ Administration

e. _____ County Commissioner

f. _____ School Superintendent

g. _____ High School Principal

2. How many years have you served in this present position?

a. _____ 0 - 5

b. _____ 6 - 10

c. _____ 11 - 15

d. _____ 16 - 20

e. _____ 21 - 25

f. _____ 25+

3. Present Age:

a. _____ 20 - 25

b. _____ 26 - 35

c. _____ 36 - 45

d. _____ 46 - 55

e. _____ 56 - 65

f. _____ 65+

4. a. _____ Female

b. _____ Male

5. Which of the following best represents the highest level of education you have achieved?
- a. _____ High School c. _____ Baccalaureate Degree
b. _____ Attended College d. _____ Advanced Degree
6. How well do you feel you understand the mission/purpose of Tri-County Community College?
- a. _____ Fully Understand
b. _____ Some Understanding
c. _____ Do Not Understand

II. Please use the following scale to indicate your perceptions regarding: a) Tri-County Community College's current mission/purpose, b) its effectiveness in fulfilling its current mission/purpose, c) and should the indicated service be a part of its future mission/ purpose. Please use the appropriate number to indicate your response.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Undecided
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

1. a. _____ TCCC's mission/purpose is to provide vocational and technical training.
- b. _____ TCCC is effectively providing vocational and technical training.

- c._____ TCCC should provide vocational and technical training.
2. a._____ TCCC's mission/purpose is to provide a college transfer program.
- b._____ TCCC is effectively providing a college transfer program.
- c._____ TCCC should provide a college transfer program.
3. a._____ TCCC's mission/purpose is to achieve educational excellence through expansion of its educational programs.
- b._____ TCCC is effectively achieving educational excellence through expansion of its educational programs.
- c._____ TCCC should achieve educational excellence through expansion of its educational programs.
4. a._____ TCCC's mission/purpose is to aid in the economic development of its service area.
- b._____ TCCC is effectively aiding in the economic development of its service area.
- c._____ TCCC should aid in the economic development of its service area.
-

5. a. _____ TCCC's mission/purpose is to maintain a strong Continuing Education program with emphasis on Literacy Training (Adult Basic Education, G.E.D. Preparation, and Basic Skills).
 - b. _____ TCCC is effectively maintaining a strong Continuing Education program with emphasis on Literacy Training (Adult Basic Education, G.E.D. Preparation, and Basic Skills).
 - c. _____ TCCC should provide a strong Continuing Education program with emphasis on Literacy Training (Adult Basic Education, G.E.D. Preparation, and Basic Skills).
 6. a. _____ TCCC's mission/purpose is to maintain a strong Continuing Education program with emphasis on personal enrichment and cultural programs.
 - b. _____ TCCC is effectively maintaining a strong Continuing Education program with emphasis on personal enrichment and cultural programs.
 - c. _____ TCCC should maintain a strong Continuing Education program with emphasis on personal enrichment and cultural programs.
 7. a. _____ TCCC's mission/purpose is to maintain a strong Continuing Education program by providing educational programs to business and industry.
-

- b. _____ TCCC is effectively maintaining a strong Continuing Education program by providing educational programs to business and industry.
 - c. _____ TCCC should maintain a strong Continuing Education program by providing educational programs to business and industry.
8. a. _____ TCCC's mission/purpose is to continually evaluate the educational needs of the community.
- b. _____ TCCC is effectively, continuing to evaluate the educational needs of the community.
 - c. _____ TCCC should continually evaluate the educational needs of the community.
9. a. _____ TCCC's mission/purpose is to maintain cooperative agreements with public schools.
- b. _____ TCCC is effectively maintaining cooperative agreements with public schools.
 - c. _____ TCCC should maintain cooperative agreements with public schools.
10. a. _____ TCCC's mission/purpose is to maintain articulation between the college and other institutions of higher learning.

- b. ____ TCCC is effectively maintaining articulation between the college and other institutions of higher learning.
 - c. ____ TCCC should maintain articulation between the college and other institutions of higher learning.
11. a. ____ TCCC's mission/purpose is to operate under an "open door" admission policy.
- b. ____ TCCC is effectively operating under an "open door" admission policy.
 - c. ____ TCCC should operate under an "open door" admission policy.
12. a. ____ TCCC's mission/purpose is to provide career guidance and testing to students.
- b. ____ TCCC is effectively providing career guidance and testing to students.
 - c. ____ TCCC should provide career guidance and testing to students.
13. a. ____ TCCC's mission/purpose is to provide informational services to the community that promotes an understanding of its needs and accomplishments.

- b. _____ TCCC is effectively providing informational services to the community that promotes an understanding of its needs and accomplishments.
- c. _____ TCCC should provide informational services to the community that promotes an understanding of its needs and accomplishments.

III. Please rank by degree of importance your perceptions of TCCC's current emphasis on selected mission parts. Please use the same scale to indicate your perceptions regarding the degree of importance TCCC should place on these items in the future.

1. Most Important
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
6. Least Important

Current EmphasisFuture Emphasis

_____	College Transfer Program	_____
_____	Literacy Skills (GED, Adult	_____
	Basic Education, Basic Skills)	
_____	Vocational & Technical Training	_____
_____	Non-Credit Training Programs	_____
	for Business/Industry	
_____	Continually Evaluate Educa-	_____
	tional Needs of Community	
_____	Non-Credit Personal and	_____
	Cultural Enrichment Programs	

IV.

1. How important do you feel that a clearly defined mission/purpose is for effective planning?
 - a. _____ Very Important b. _____ Important
 - c. _____ Not Important
2. How well do you understand the funding process of the N.C. Community College System?
 - a. _____ Fully Understand
 - b. _____ Some Understanding
 - c. _____ Do Not Understand

3. Do you feel that the N.C. Community College System is attempting to become too comprehensive (to be everything for everyone)?
a. _____Yes b. _____No
4. Is TCCC located in the county in which you reside?
a. _____Yes b. _____No
5. Do you feel that residents share a greater degree of "ownership" toward the college when it is located in their respective county?
a. _____Yes b. _____No

PLEASE ADD ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS YOU THINK
WOULD BE HELPFUL TO THIS STUDY:

APPENDIX B
LETTER TO RESPONDENTS

204 Duke Street
Murphy, NC 28906
March 31, 1989

«Name»
«Company»
«Address»
«City»

Dear «Salutation»:

My doctoral dissertation topic for a degree in Educational Administration at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro is based on a study of the mission and mission effectiveness of Tri-County Community College located in Murphy, North Carolina. Copies of the enclosed questionnaire have been mailed to selected business and industry leaders, county commissioners, and public school officials located within the Graham, Clay, and Cherokee County service area. Full-time faculty and senior administrators of Tri-County Community College are also included in the study.

The purpose of this study is to determine how faculty and administrators, business and industry representatives, public school personnel, and county commissioners compare in their perceptions of Tri-County Community College's mission and mission effectiveness. The results of this study should be of importance to Tri-County Community College as well as the region it serves. Knowing the perceptions that the faculty and administrators, business and industry representatives, county commissioners, and public school personnel have of the college's mission and mission

March 31, 1989

Page 2

effectiveness will be an asset in strategic planning. Your participation is vital to the success of this study.

You are encouraged to answer every item on the questionnaire. This will take only a small amount of your time and will assist in gathering valuable information. Be assured that none of the data collected will be reported in relation to any individual respondent or organization.

A self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience. I look forward to your returning your response to me within the next two weeks.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me by mail at the above address, or by phone at 837-5896. Thank you for your participation in this study.

Sincerely,

W. Harry Jarrett
Dean of Continuing Education
Tri-County Community College